DECEMBER 1963

Commentary

VOLUME THIRTY-SIX, NUMBER SIX

RUSSIAN ART & ANTI-SEMITISM

Two Documents

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A Speech by Mikhail Romm

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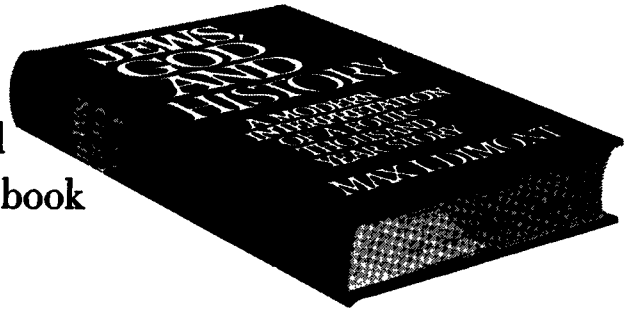

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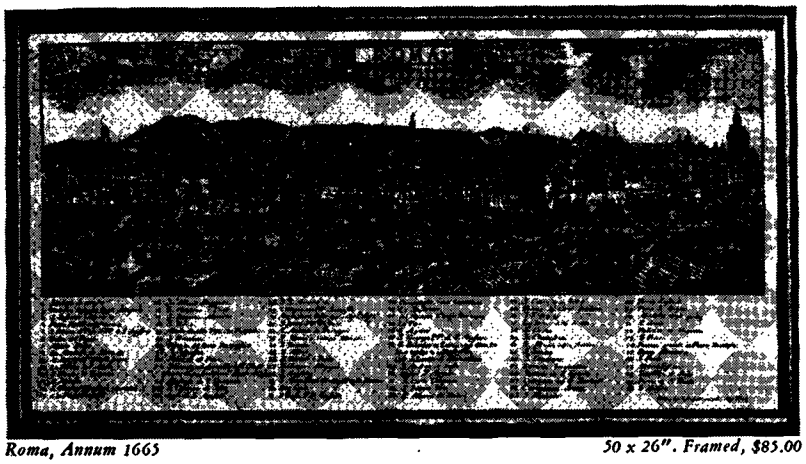

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Bangkok (Krung Thep), Thai., 827,290	D4	30
Barcelona, Sp., 1,276,675	H2	17
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DECEMBER 1963
NUMBER 6
VOLUME 36

Russian Art & Anti-Semitism	433	YEVTUSHENKO *vs.* KHRUSHCHEV A Speech by MIKHAIL ROMM
Non-Rule in America	438	DAVID T. BAZELON
Writing About Jews	446	PHILIP ROTH
West African Diary	453	JOHN MANDER
Kant and Judaism	460	EMIL L. FACKENHEIM
The Tory Succession: A London Letter	468	GEORGE LICHTHEIM
A Story Stella	473	SYDOR REY
A Commentary Report		
Anti-Communism and the Corporations	479	ALAN F. WESTIN
Letters from Readers	424	
Books in Review		
The Group, by Mary McCarthy	488	THOMAS ROGERS
The Benefactor, by Susan Sontag; and Nickel Miseries, by Ivan Gold	489	ROBERT W. FLINT
Confusions, by Jack Ludwig; The War of Camp Omongo, by Burt Blechman; and Stick Your Neck Out, by Mordecai Richler	492	STANLEY KAUFFMANN

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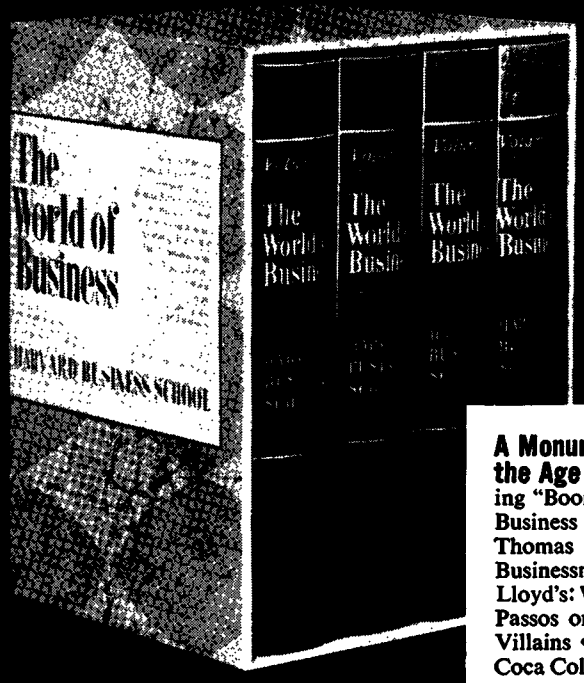

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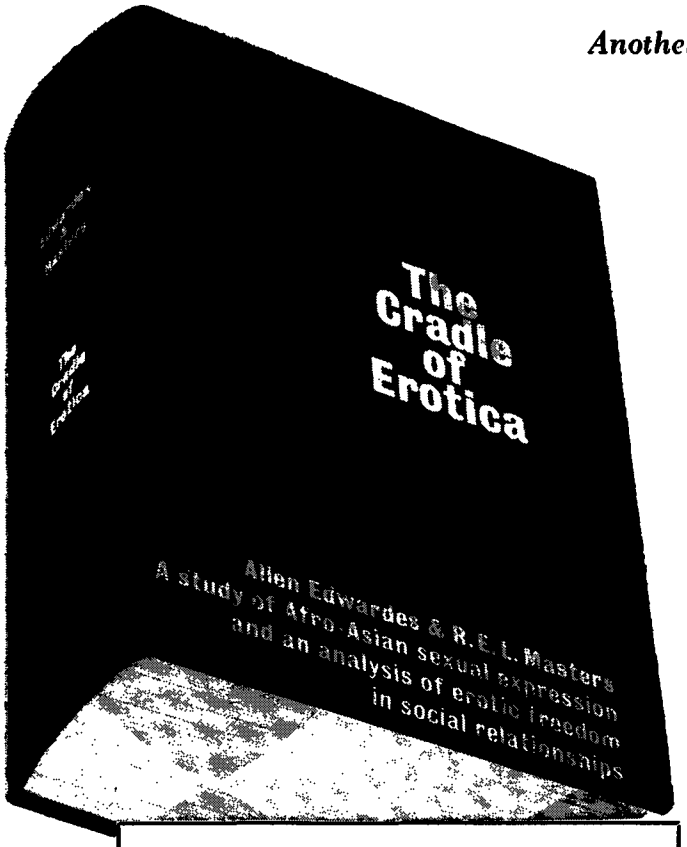
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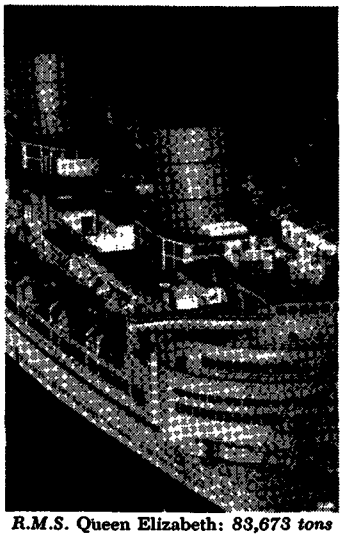

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LETTERS FROM READERS

An Exchange

To the Editor of Commentary:

Professor H. L. Ginsberg in reviewing my book, *Before the Bible* [October], has misrepresented what I have written. For example, when he states, that "to Gordon, buying a piece of land near Shechem to pitch one's tent on, buying a burial plot near Hebron, and buying rations in Egypt when there are none to be gotten in Canaan, are all trading activities," he is attributing to me something I never said. I have, to be sure, called attention to newly unearthed cuneiform texts that confirm the mercantile interests of the Patriarchs alluded to in Genesis 34:10, 21; and 42:34; but nowhere have I implied that the Patriarchs ever bought land or rations for resale or trading.

Apparently Professor Ginsberg has not yet adequately grasped what has taken place in the field covered by *Before the Bible*. When he states that "as is well known, the Greek and Latin alphabets were borrowed from the Phoenicians," he is saying what every schoolboy should know. The significant thing to note is that something *new* has emerged, for as I wrote (on page 216), "it turns out that the Greeks learned both of their systems of writing from the Phoenicians; first the Minoan syllabary, and then the alphabet." In the months and years that lie ahead, this finding is certain to have an impact on our understanding of the origins of Western culture.

Ginsberg's mode of criticism boils down to taking details out of context and then engaging in personal disparagement. Though I expressly reminded my readers that "in all comparative studies, we must beware of equating" and of implying identity in every detail just because there is a specific area of agreement (p. 286), Ginsberg makes much of the differences between a Greek passage dealing with ritual purification through washing away one's defilement in the sea and a Hebrew text telling of casting one's sins into the sea. Actually I offered this Greco-Hebrew parallel as one of "limited scope" (p. 12) while leading up "to a type of parallel of still more specific nature" (p. 16) concerning Mycenaean-Davidic military organization which has been accepted as sound by every scholar who has commented on it so far. Obviously the numerous parallels in my book are of unequal weight, and have been presented and used as such.

Even where Ginsberg approves of my conclusions, he resorts to petty criticism. For example, he is favorably impressed with my demonstrations that the Heroic Age of the Second Millennium evoked parallel Hebrew, Greek, and Ugaritic literary themes, but then goes on to say he would have "liked it better" had I pointed out some obvious differences between the seven-day siege in a Ugaritic text and the ten-year siege of Troy. Valid parallels are not supposed to be exact duplicates in detail. I have explained why "the parallels are worth discussing at length, and why the more numerous differences are not spelled out in detail" (p. 18). It would serve no useful purpose to obscure essential subject matter with innumerable qualifications that are nonessential in this frame of reference. On p. 55, n. 1, I told my readers where they could find a systematic treatment of Greco-Hebrew differences.

Arnold Toynbee . . . predicted in the London *Observer* that my "demolition of the previous partition wall between Greek and Hebrew studies will endure" (December 16, 1962). Ginsberg need not concur, because as I wrote in my book we have no "right to demand that every student of antiquity be [equally] perceptive in the field of comparative culture" (p. 134). On the other hand, he could have tried to see the forest instead of contenting himself with an astigmatic view of some of the trees. Even a casual reader glancing at either the first or last page of *Before the Bible* would have noticed that the book had a thesis: "Greek and Hebrew civilizations are parallel structures built upon the same East Mediterranean foundation" (pp. 9, 302). Moreover, I was specific as to what the common background was in terms of people, language, time and place. . . .

In bridging the gap between the earliest Hebrews and Greeks, I am doing the best I can. As a commentator and translator of Scripture, Professor Ginsberg is doing the best he can. It would be ridiculous and arrogant for me or anyone else to tell him to give up his current work because I happen to prefer his studies

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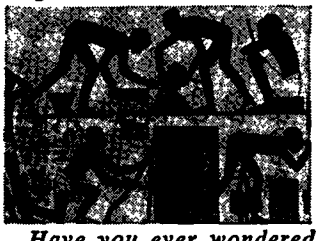

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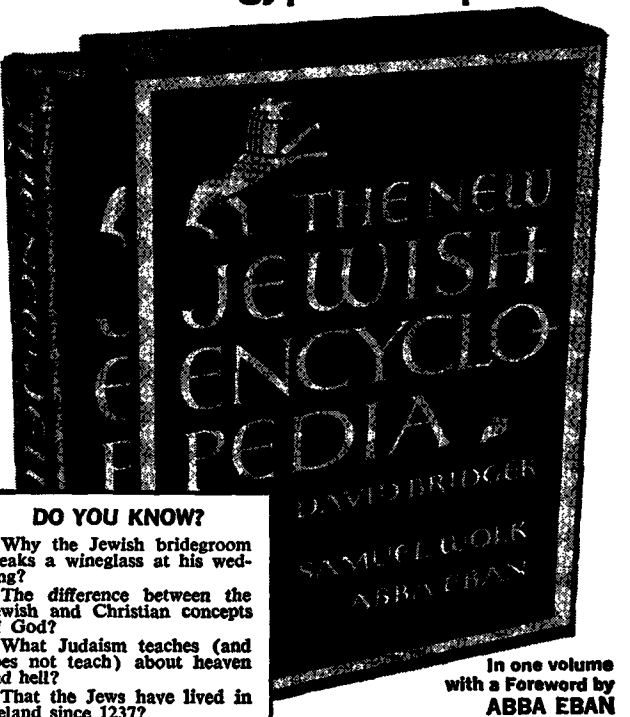

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concerning Ugaritic in the 1930's. . . . He and he alone is to decide what he should or should not do professionally. By the same token it is presumptuous of him to publish the gratuitous advice that I abandon my current work and revert to what I accomplished years ago just because he prefers it.

Every point in Professor Ginsberg's review is answered in the book itself, provided that the latter is "read and understood as a whole" (p. 9, n. 1), not fragmentized into little bits pulled out of context.

CYRUS H. GORDON
Brookline, Massachusetts

PROFESSOR GINSBERG *writes:*

I wish Dr. Gordon had not made it necessary for me to repeat that there is no such thing as "a Hebrew text telling [sic!] of casting one's [sic!] sins into the sea" but only an entreaty (Micah 7:19) that God may—figuratively—do that to our sins, which the metaphor does not even conceive of as sticking to our bodies but only as kept by God in a sealed package (Hosea 13:12; Job 14:17). And I cannot understand why it wasn't enough for me to point out once that to this Hebrew entreaty, the washing away of purely physical grime from the bodies of Gilgamesh and of characters in the Iliad (here not always in the sea, as I pointed out) is not "a parallel of limited scope" but no parallel at all.

It certainly shouldn't be hard to find "a parallel of a . . . more specific nature" than that, but the one "concerning Mycenaean-Davidic military organization" is hardly more "specific." In the Iliad and Odyssey texts which Gordon cites in the passage of his book to which he refers me, military divisions are led by three officers each, one of whom is supreme. What is mentioned in II Samuel 23 and I Chronicles 11, on the other hand, is a single trio of Davidic fighters of whom it is not related that they ever led any division. (Of Abishai, II Samuel 23:18–19 and I Chronicles 11:20–21 inform us in a garbled text—the critical notes in *Biblia Hebraica* are convincing—that he was a leader of something, but the same passage adds in crystal clear language that, *pace* Gordon, Abishai was *not* a member of the trio.) Those three soldiers of David were distinguished as "the three" or "the three fighters" (*gibborim*) precisely for executing *all by themselves* an exploit of breathtaking heroism (II Samuel 23:13–17; I Chronicles 11:15–19). When David's army fought in two or three sections, each

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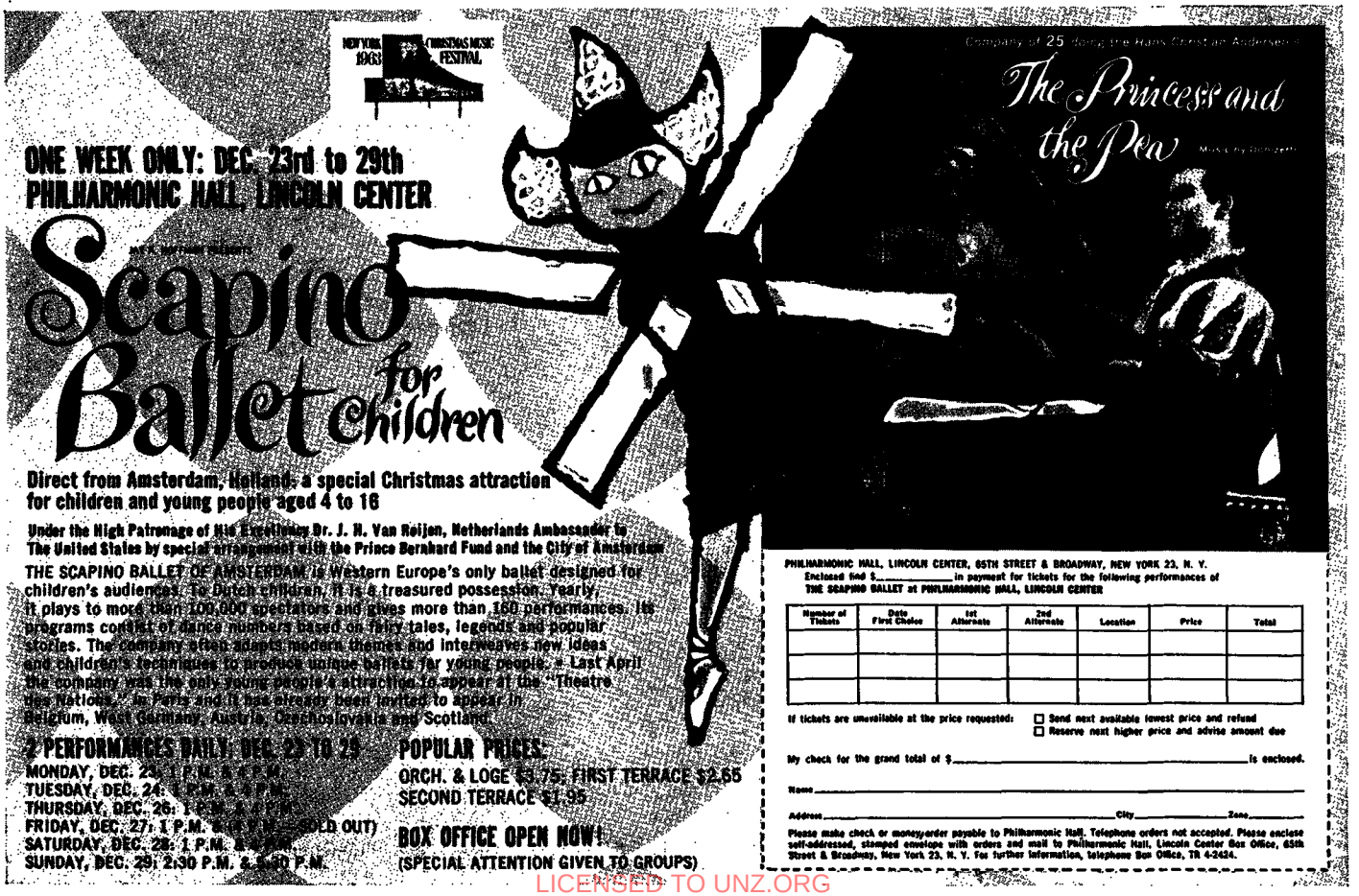
section was led by *one* senior officer: II Samuel 10:9–10; 18:2.

What I missed in Gordon's presentation of the parallel between the Ugaritic Keret epic and the Trojan War motif was not only an admission of obvious differences which he now does not deny, but also an indication of "the doubts that attach to some of the parallel features which he represents as certain." That Keret's wife—or a woman for whom he had duly paid the bride price—had eloped with somebody else, is open to doubt on at least five good grounds which I cannot enumerate here for lack of space. It was therefore not petty of me to regret that Gordon represents these parallel features as certain. After all, scholars are disinterested investigators, not trial lawyers.

I for my part do not hesitate to admit that I misunderstood Gordon's arguments from the Patriarchs' purchases of land. His purpose was actually to show that the Patriarchs *differed* from the Urite merchants at Ugarit in being permitted to acquire land and to sojourn indefinitely in the host countries. But that makes his case, if anything, weaker than ever. For he doesn't, after all, even claim to be able to cite a single instance of a Patriarch buying for the purpose of selling at a profit, but only cites instances of the Patriarchs doing things that the merchants from Ur at Ugarit were specifically forbidden to do. What, then, is his evidence that the Patriarchs were merchants? The fact, says Gordon, that Abraham was able to pay Ephron for his burial ground "400 shekels of silver acceptable to the merchant." Since this was centuries before the introduction of coinage into the Fertile Crescent, the phrase doubtless means something like "400 shekels of silver ingots checked for full weight"; and would Ephron have accepted a payment of that magnitude from anybody—merchant or otherwise—without taking that precaution? Another proof of Abraham's having engaged in commerce is, according to Gordon, the fact that his fortune included gold and silver as well as cattle (and slaves). As if there were no stockbreeders in Texas who have nice bank balances and whose wives wear jewelry! Be it noted that we do have four specific instances of Patriarchs receiving large accessions of wealth (including — Genesis 20:16 — 1,000 shekels of silver): (1) Genesis 12:16; (2) 20:14, 16; (3) 26:12–14; (4) 30:31 ff. These four instances illustrate three different methods of getting rich. Needless to say, mercantile enterprise is not one of them.

Gordon could not know that the manuscript of my review did refer to his theory that the language of certain very scanty ancient texts from Crete is Phoenician but that the editor cut that section out—because he found it abstruse and because he just didn't have space for it. In a nutshell, I am not alone in maintaining that the said theory cannot be regarded as proved. If it were to be confirmed, it would be a shining feather in Gordon's cap which he knows I would not begrudge him. But its implications would not be so far-reaching as he claims. For one thing, it would in no case render either those of his conclusions which are based on uncertain interpretations of Ugaritic texts less uncertain, or those (by no means exhausted by my review and this rejoinder) which are based on untenable interpretations of Akkadian, Greek, and Hebrew texts any less untenable. Now, forests consist of trees, and wholes of parts.

What I was "presumptuous" enough to do throughout my review was state what I believed to be true. I was innocent of "personal disparagement"; my—surely implicit—"advice" to Professor Gordon relates to methodology, not to field of research.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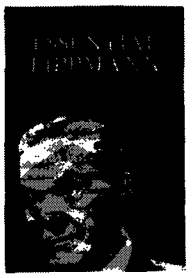

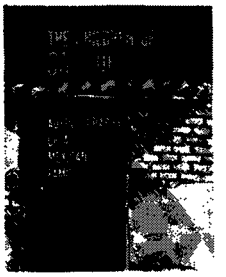

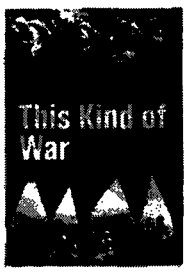

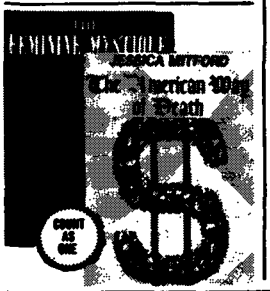

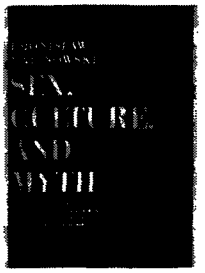
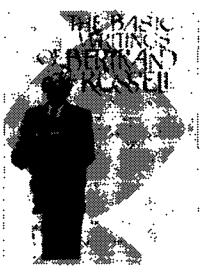

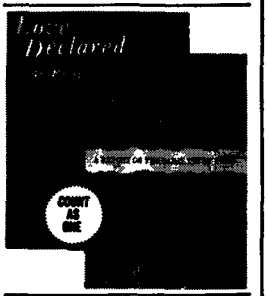

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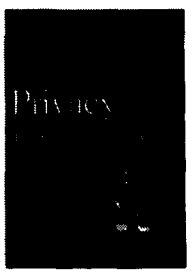
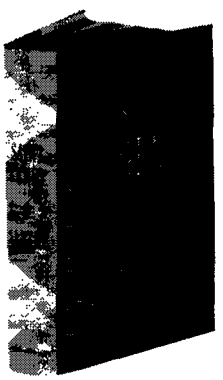

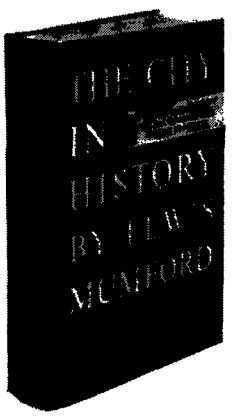

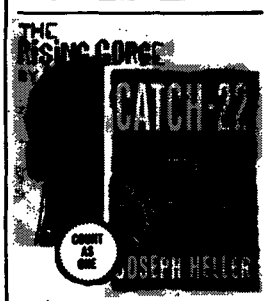

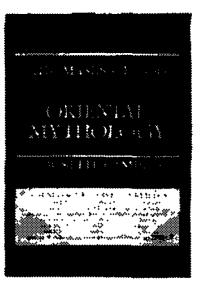

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The Good Society

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his stimulating article "The Good Society" [September], Nathan Glazer quotes from Kenneth Boulding's article "A Look at Post-Civilization: Where Are We Going, If Anywhere." This article was published in the April 1962 issue of *Liberation*.

For those readers who are interested in the full text of Kenneth Boulding's article, a limited number of copies of that issue are still available at forty cents each from *Liberation*, 5 Beekman Street, New York 38, New York.

Dave Dellinger
Liberation
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

Nathan Glazer paints a bleak picture of the "good society" and in doing so exhibits a striking lack of imagination. "Those of us Who Lived Through the 30's" (by God!) now make profound statements about the "end of ideology," thus justifying disenchantment and lack of engagement. Those of us who have not lived through the 30's reply, "Old and tired men, you have forgotten (and betrayed) youth—ours *and* yours."

Robert M. Cook
Princeton, New Jersey

To the Editor of Commentary:

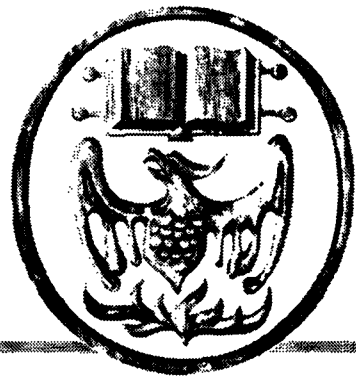
Perhaps what Nathan Glazer calls the "old social forms" are the very cause of the "increasing number of casualties our society produces." If so, what is needed is not to make these forms newer, larger, more complex, or even more efficient—since they would then produce only an increasing number of casualties.

The emptiness of "establishment liberalism" is indicated by Mr. Glazer's admission that he can think . . . only of an organizational solution and is willing to settle for "*some*thing." In keeping with that approach . . . Mr. Glazer seems to "input" the radical solutions—of Paul Goodman, for example—but never really considers them realistic or takes them seriously.

Eugene S. Mornell
Los Angeles, California

Note

Norman Mailer is now working full time on a new novel, and has therefore decided to suspend his column "Responses & Reactions," which has been appearing bi-monthly in Commentary for the past year.—Ed.



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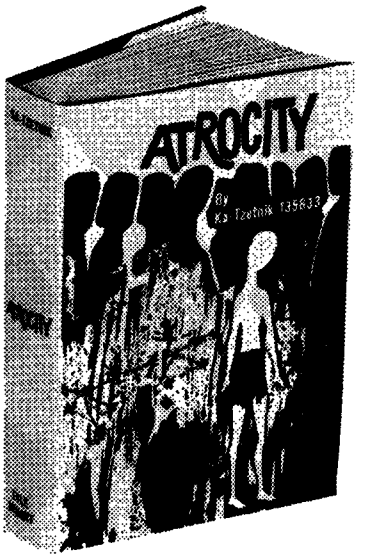

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RUSSIAN ART & ANTI-SEMITISM

Two Documents

Yevtushenko vs. Khrushchev

A Speech by Mikhail Romm

EXACTLY one year ago, on December 1, 1962, Nikita S. Khrushchev paid an unexpected visit to the Manezh gallery in Moscow, to inspect a special exhibit of abstract and semi-abstract paintings by a group of young Soviet artists. His angry reaction, couched in expletives and obscenities, immediately became the sensation of Moscow, and the events of the succeeding six months revealed more clearly than ever before the nature of the ferment that has been agitating major segments of the Soviet intelligentsia in the last few years. They supplied evidence of three truly sensational developments (of which close students in the West had been increasingly aware but of which the general public was largely ignorant): that the younger generation of intellectuals and creative artists, supported by a considerable number of middle-aged and even a handful of elderly established literary figures, were making an effort to expand the area of their freedom to write, paint, and sculpt; that this effort was being combatted by many Stalinist artists and officials of the artistic unions and enterprises; and that the Communist Party leadership, divided in its counsels on how to cope with the phenomenon of a rebellious young intelligentsia, was exerting some pressures, clamping down on certain "excesses," exacting some grudging and ambiguous self-criticism from a few—but was settling for now into an indecisive muddle.

A good deal of the foregoing came to light as a result of the publicity surrounding the extraordinary meetings between Khrushchev and his Party colleagues and several hundred leading Soviet intellectuals on three occasions during the past year: on December 17, 1962, and on March 8 and June 18, 1963. Though Khrushchev's speeches on the latter two occasions were widely published in the Soviet press, neither his speech of December 17 nor his spontaneous exchanges with the intellectuals on any of the three occasions have appeared in print. For months now, however, typed manuscripts—purporting to give the texts of who said what, to whom, where, and when—have passed from hand to hand, and have been read by many thousands in Moscow, Leningrad, and elsewhere.

One of these typescripts—brought out of the USSR in various versions by Western visitors—appears below, together with the text of a speech by Mikhail Romm that has circulated in similar fashion. The challenge to publication of such documents in the West is twofold: to obviate any danger to the authors, since their real names are used; and to authenticate the texts.

Both conditions can now be essentially satisfied. By this point, the positions of both Mikhail Romm and Yevgeny Yevtushenko are clearly known to Khrushchev and the Party leadership, to scores of thousands of intelligentsia and university youth and their supporters on the peripheries of the intellectual and academic community—and, not least, to the West. The Soviet authorities are fully aware of their views, of the fact that such manuscripts have circulated widely, and that they have also found their way into the hands of Western visitors and observers. Their publication can therefore come as no shock to the authorities.

As for the problem of authentication, it has been, for obvious reasons, a technically difficult one. As indicated, these texts emerged from the USSR in various versions, and each posed a different kind of problem. The versions of the Romm text differed so little from one another that in time and after a meticulous process of inquiry and counter-checking, it became very easy to determine its genuineness. (The speech was delivered at a public meeting of cinema and theater workers during November-December 1962.) The Yevtushenko text is more complicated. The same kind of investigative process, coupled with everything else Yevtushenko has published at home and abroad, has made it clear that the remarks attributed to him here are genuine both in substance and spirit. What may be in question is whether he made all these remarks on the same occasion. It seems entirely possible that the two sections of his "speech" were delivered on two separate occasions—the part on abstract art, in the course of a running debate with Khrushchev at the Manezh; and the part on anti-Semitism, at the December 17 meeting. But their authenticity—as of Khrushchev's interjections—is no longer disputable.

Yevtushenko needs no introduction to Western readers. He burst into national and world renown after September 19, 1961, when his poem, "Babi Yar," appeared in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* ("Literary Gazette"), the organ of the Soviet Writers Union. He remains today a significant, if erratic and somewhat ambiguous, spokesman of the younger Soviet intelligentsia.

Romm, in his own way, is no less fascinating a figure. He is perhaps the most distinguished living Soviet film director. He began his career as one of a band of experimenters in the silent screen of the early 1920's, established himself a decade later as a leading director of orthodox films, and then re-emerged in the post-Stalin period as both

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an avant-gardist and a public exponent of greater liberality in Soviet art and society.

For Romm, as for the young intellectuals whose champion he is and for whom he symbolizes the Golden Age of the 1920's, there is a connection between the struggle against anti-Semitism and the struggle against repression of freedom in the arts. Romm (who is Jewish) and Yevtushenko (who is not) reflect the feelings of the entire dissenting generation of young intelligentsia, sons who are turning away from their fathers of the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's and turning back to their grandfathers of the 1920's—a period when there was experimentation in the arts and when anti-Semitism was officially regarded as a disease and was openly fought. In fighting it openly now, the young intellectuals are simultaneously fighting those forces in Soviet society which stand in the way of greater freedom of expression in general.

—MOSHE DECTER

* * *

Yevtushenko *vs.* Khrushchev

YEVTUSHENKO: First of all I want to thank the leaders of the Party and the government for kindly making it possible for me to speak here. Permit me to begin my speech with a verse which I wrote not so long ago which I consider very timely. [Recites the two last lines of the poem, "Babi Yar."]

COMRADE KHRUSHCHEV: Comrade Yevtushenko, this poem has no place here.

YEVTUSHENKO: Respected Nikita Sergeevich, I especially selected this poem and with the following purpose in mind. We all know that no one has done more than you in the liquidation of the negative consequences of the Stalin cult of personality and we are all very grateful to you for this. However, one problem yet remains which is also a negative consequence of those times, but which today has not yet been resolved. This is the problem of anti-Semitism.

COMRADE KHRUSHCHEV: That is not a problem.

YEVTUSHENKO: It is a problem, Nikita Sergeevich. It cannot be denied and it cannot be suppressed. It is necessary to come to grips with it time and again. It has a place. I myself was a witness to such things. Moreover, it came from people who occupy official posts, and thus it assumed an official character. We cannot go forward to Communism with such a heavy load as Judophobia. And here there can be neither silence nor denial. The problem must be resolved and we hope that it will be resolved. The whole progressive world is watching us and the resolution of this problem will even more greatly enhance the authority of our country. By resolution of the problem I mean the cessation of anti-Semitism—[*not clear*], along with instituting criminal proceedings against the anti-Semites. This positive measure will give many people of Jewish nationality the opportunity to take heart and will lead us to even greater success in all areas of Communist construction.

I would like to say a few words about abstract painting and our artists. I think that our young artists have acted incorrectly in organizing the "underground exhibition" and inviting foreign correspondents to it.[1] This was done without forethought and deserves widespread censure. We also cannot permit our artists to sell their works abroad. This can only be a blow to our prestige and to our art. But I want to say that we must have great patience with this abstract trend in our art and not rush to suppress it, for the result may be the opposite. I know the artists in question, I know their work, and I can emphasize that side by side with the abstract aspect, they are attracted to the realistic manner of expression. I am convinced that several formalistic tendencies in their work will be straightened out in time.

COMRADE KHRUSHCHEV: The grave straightens out the hump-backed.

YEVTUSHENKO: Nikita Sergeevich, we have come a long way since the time when only the grave straightened out hump-backs. Really, there are other ways. I think that the best way is to display patience and tact and give examples of how to work at our art. I think that we should permit the existence of various schools in painting and let art, our Soviet art, progress in the arguments among them. Artists, like writers and musicians, are most sensitive to any pressure. Therefore, it is best not to resort to it. Everything will remain in its place.

COMRADE KHRUSHCHEV: I don't believe that you personally like abstract art.

YEVTUSHENKO: Nikita Sergeevich, there are all kinds of abstractionism. What is important is that it should not be charlatanism. I submit that a situation can occur when it would not be possible to convey the newest trends of our epoch in the old manner of writing. I must openly admit that I do not like our portrait painting although it is realistic. I very much respect those comrades who are depicted in these portraits, but the portraits themselves seem to me to be ordinary color photographs incapable of stirring the viewer. I cannot permit the idea, Nikolai [*sic*] Sergeevich, that you can like the tastelessly drawn picture, "N. S. Khrushchev among the Workers." The latest period of my life has been closely linked up with Cuba. I like Cuban abstract art very much. It would be good if we would organize an exhibition of Cuban art. Cuban abstract art is very popular among the Cuban people and their leaders. Fidel Castro is attracted to it. Cuban abstract art is helping the Cuban revolution and is walking in step with it. I think that our art, including the abstractionists, is also going in one straight line of fighters for Communism. I appeal not for appeasement, but I call for self-restraint, for the deepened study of the theory and practice of modern art, and in the final analysis,

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a consolidation of the forces of literary and artistic workers for the good of our country.

Thank you for your attention.

* * *

A Speech by Mikhail Romm

THE SUBJECT of the report "Traditions and Innovations" offers an occasion to talk about such serious things. The Voronezh theater director, Comrade Dobrotin, spoke before me very well and with much passion. He vehemently protested against the remnants of Stalinism in the field of consciousness.

He told us the story of those leaders in a province who—after a drunken party—started a fire on the terrace of a sanitarium and imposed disciplinary measures against the person responsible for cultural affairs at the sanitarium because he tried to protest. This is a significant example!

At the same time, however, Comrade Dobrotin advised that Comrade Leonov[2] should be called before the CC [Central Committee] and told to write a comedy. And if Comrade Leonov has other wishes? If at the moment he doesn't feel like working for the theater? In accordance with Dobrotin, if the Party's CC asks it, Leonov will start writing, obediently, and turn out a good comedy. Are there no other means? You don't seem to understand, Comrade Dobrotin, that this way of thinking also stems from the old methods, that it resembles a bit starting a fire on a terrace. [Applause.]

During your speech you let yourself go about the modern ballet. You expressed regret that on New Year's Eve your actor Popov did a Western dance. I have never danced in my life; simply because I can't dance, be it the waltz, the mazurka or the *pas de patineur*. But it seems to me that in a small hall it is preferable to do a Western dance rather than the mazurka because for that the hall would be too small.

For many years we tried to invent a real Soviet dance. Finally it was invented. It is called the "Promenade" and requires a lot of room. On putting it on television, the explanations concerning certain steps of this dance took four sessions, but no spectator understood all its finesse. On the other hand Popov learned how to do his dance at once. Evidently it was a simple dance. I should like to know if, performing this on New Year's Eve, Popov did much harm and what the harm was exactly.

Comrade Dobrotin also let himself go on singers without voices. For myself, contrary to him, I like singers without voices. I prefer Bernes and, in general, those who talk instead of sing, their mouths wide open, emitting trills. Of course, the aria *Perdona, Celeste Creatura* must be sung by a well-trained voice. On the other hand the song *The Little Girl Goes toward the Fields* needs other qualities. In the field of art, I like everything that is expressive. [Applause.]

In our country, however, certain methods were imposed against which it is necessary to fight. I'm ready to fight against my own shortcomings still remaining from the past.[3] Precisely because of that, before we take up traditions and innovations I should like to clarify the problem of certain traditions which were imposed in our country. There are good ones and there are very bad ones; for example, the one of playing the Overture of Tchaikovsky's *Symphony 1812* twice a year.

Comrades, as I understand it, this Overture expresses a very clear political idea—the idea of the triumph of orthodox religion and autocracy over revolution. It's a bad piece of music written by Tchaikovsky on command. It's a thing Peter Ilyitch was himself ashamed of at the end of his life. I'm not a specialist in the history of music, but I am convinced that this Overture was composed for passing reasons, with the very clear aim of pleasing the church and the monarchy.

Why should the Soviet power humiliate the *Marseillaise*, the marvelous hymn of the French Revolution, by drowning it out with the noise of church bells? Why should it celebrate the triumph of Czarist ideology, the ideology of the "Black Hundreds"?

But to play this Overture has become a tradition. After the October Revolution, this Overture was played the first time during those years when the expression "cosmopolite without a fatherland" was invented to replace that other expression "dirty Jew."

Among other things, and in certain instances, the latter expression was even printed. On the cover of the [satirical] magazine *Crocodile* a cartoon appeared during those years presenting a "cosmopolite without a fatherland" of clearly Jewish type, holding a book in his hands on which one could read in big characters the word "GID." Not "André Gide" but simply "Gid."[4]

Neither the cartoonist nor any of those responsible for this scoundrel's joke has been condemned by us. We have preferred to keep quiet, to forget all this, as one could forget that dozens of our best theater and movie people were declared "cosmopolites without a fatherland": for instance, comrades Yutkevic,[5] Leonid Trauberg,[6] Sutyrki,[7] Kovarski,[8] Bleiman,[9] and others present here. They have been authorized to work again, some in the Party, some in their particular union. But is it really possible to heal the wounds, to forget what one has suffered for many years, when you were trampled on and covered with mud?[10]

And those who directed this shameful campaign with joy and pleasure, who racked their brains to invent other things and to drag other people into the mire, have they been made to pay for what they did? People don't even reproach them, holding that this would show lack of tact!

The magazine *October*,[11] edited by Kocetov,[12] has recently become interested in motion pictures. From January to November it published articles smearing

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all the progress achieved by Soviet films, expressing suspicion toward the critics of the great artists of the older generation and even the new one. These articles were inspired by the same persons who led the campaign of denunciation of "cosmopolites without a fatherland." It seems to me, however, that we should not forget all that happened.

Today many writers are starting to do scripts for the theater or motion pictures denouncing the Stalinist epoch and the cult of the personality. This is because it has become possible and necessary, while three or four years ago it was still thought that Nikita Sergeevich's speech at the Twentieth Congress was sufficient. A more or less leading official told me this clearly: "Listen, the Party has shown infinite courage. Study Comrade Khrushchev's speech, and that's enough. Why stick your nose into this business?"

Today it has become definitely clear that it was not sufficient, that it is necessary for us to think for ourselves, to speak and write for ourselves.

It is very important to unmask Stalin and Stalinism, but the heritage left by Stalinism is not less important. And it is not less important to look around at what surrounds us and to formulate a judgment on events that occur in the social life of art.

Our meetings are conducted in a calm, tranquil, academic tone. In the meantime a very energetic group of rather bad writers hits out viciously in the magazine *October* against the new literature and nobody answers them in this arena. On the other hand, the very moment Yevtushenko published his poem "Babi Yar," this group printed a reply in the journal *Literature and Life* [*Literatura i Zhisn*].[13]

Not long ago I happened to be in Italy and America, and I should like to say that what was considered to be a scandal in the West was not Yevtushenko's poem, but the response to it. The local journalists asked me, "What do you think of the new wave of anti-Semitism in the USSR?"

I asked with perplexity what they were talking about. They mentioned Starikov's article[14] and Markov's poem.[15]

That issue of the journal *Literature and Life* was shameful, as are the latest issues of the magazine *October*.

Since the articles in *October* are aimed at me, it is difficult and embarrassing for me to reply. Difficult but necessary.

The attacks against films carried in *October* began in the January issue with an article on the picture *Peace to Him Who Enters,* an article written in an absolutely inadmissible tone of political denunciation. The only error in calculation made by the editorial board was that they failed to name anyone specifically in their denunciation. Ten years ago, after such an article, somebody would be put in chains, forbidden to work, sent to faraway regions. But it is a fact that times have changed and that this denunciation probably wasn't even read. But the denunciation remains!

Then came the attack on the films *The Letter That Wasn't Sent,*[16] *When the Storks Take Their Flight,*[17] *If This Is Love,* and *Nine Days in a Year.*[18] The themes of the accusations were not new. For *Nine Days* the hero wasn't "positive." The same thing applied to *When the Storks Take Their Flight.* In *The Letter That Wasn't Sent,* a decadent pessimism is to be found. Reisman's[19] heroes show moral deficiencies and amorality is decadent.

In the past, one was severely punished for such shortcomings. Today denunciations like these haven't had any consequences, simply because the authorities in charge don't read them or don't even exist any more. That is why neither Kilatozov[20] nor Reisman nor myself were hunted out of the movies, and the magazine became very angry. In the first and second issues of that magazine some terrible articles were published, containing general accusations against everything and everyone. Only the word "cosmopolite" wasn't used. For the rest there was a surprising resemblance to articles published fifteen years ago.

The author of the article that appeared in number two of the magazine *October* writes among other things: "Whereas the Italians themselves recognize that neo-realism is dead, Romm continues to praise it." (I quote from memory.) In fact neo-realism is dead. It died with the help of the Vatican and the capitalist censorship. The artists of Italian neo-realism created films like Germi's *The Railwaymen,* De Sica's *The Bicycle Thief, Two Coins in the Fountain, Rome 11 O'clock in the Morning,* and other really great and unforgettable masterpieces.

Never has the film industry under a bourgeois regime created such work before, in any case not as a group and with such unity. All forces were mobilized against Italian neo-realism—the censorship, bribery, threats, sabotage of distribution, violence of all kinds. All this in order to destroy, to break, to crush this group of artists. World reaction as a whole went into action against Italian neo-realism. At that time a single article was published in our country, unfortunately signed by Polevoi,[21] a man I respect. In that article, Polevoi also attacked Italian neo-realism. I was ashamed of that article, a reaction common to all of us. That happened six years ago. We didn't encourage this current, which was very close to the Italian CP. They were strangling neo-realism and we attacked it! And it was only recently that Solovieva[22] finally wrote a book on neo-realism. She wrote it when it was necessary to treat the subject on a historical plane.

Three years ago I ventured to intervene in favor of Italian neo-realism. And even today people who insist on the importance of remaining loyal to tradition recall this sin. How did I dare intervene in favor of neo-realism? But in my opinion, neo-realism has had an influence on the youth. It must be admitted.

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If this influence existed, it did exist! You have to decide then whether this influence was positive or negative. I know our youth. I know the impression created by the Italian films. I can underline that this influence was real!

Why should we bow in all fields to what is called "the first" as we had to do in the past? I am not at all certain that this "first" is always a good thing. Let's suppose that a lone American genius invented the phonograph and that we developed the invention. Who then should be proud of it? In my opinion we should, because genius wasn't recognized in America while we developed the phonograph. We, to the contrary, make it appear that we invented everything, the cinema, the phonograph, the electric light, and the telephone while in fact it was the Americans who developed all these good things. There is no reason why we should be proud of this!

We are combing history hunting for someone who invented the locomotive before Stevenson although we know very well that we didn't build one at that time. We should give ourselves airs because of our lack of efficiency, our backwardness! Those who built the first locomotives, who made the first flight, they were right. We should be proud of being the first to fly into outer space, of having the biggest power stations in the world, and not about what occurred two hundred years ago, about the man who said "E" for the first time, whether it was Dobchinsky or Bobchinsky!

By defending and sometimes inventing this claim to be "the first" at all costs, it's impossible to say how far you can go. Only ten years ago, we tried to cut ourselves off completely from Western culture—and this, too, was covered by the word "tradition."

I was very happy today to hear Yutkevic speak about innovations and about spending much time in the West. We have lost the habit of considering that something also exists in the West. And this in Russia, the country in the world where more foreign literature is translated than anywhere else. One of the strong points of the Russian intellectuals was precisely the fact that they read all of world literature, that they stood at the top in knowledge of world culture. This, too, is one of our traditions. An excellent tradition which we needn't be reminded of today.

* * *

[1] Yevtushenko refers to a semi-private exhibit of young artists organized on November 26, 1962, at the studio of Eli Beliutin, an art teacher. A number of Western correspondents were invited to view it, as well as some Soviet cultural officials and a couple of hundred of Soviet citizens. This exhibit was closed after a few hours and then summoned to be hung at the Manezh.

[2] Leonid Leonov, with Sholokhov the premier novelist of the USSR. Born 1899, author of numerous novels, stories, and plays. His best work was perhaps done in the 1920's.

[3] Here Romm seems to be referring to the fact that he was a dutiful and well-rewarded director during the 30's and 40's, producing some of the most effective adulatory films for Stalin.

[4] In Russian the words "Gide"—and *"Zhid,"* dirty Jew, are pronounced exactly alike.

[5] Should read Yutkevich. Sergei Yutkevich, born 1904, originally a painter, became one of a group of experimental artistic designers and directors of films in the 1920's. Until the late 1940's, he had achieved enormous success with a long series of films. A 1947 movie, *Light Over Russia* was banned because of "serious errors." By 1949, when the cultural purge presided over by Andrei A. Zhdanov was in full swing, he was under attack and his career threatened because he had contributed favorable articles to volumes in honor of D. W. Griffith and Charlie Chaplin.

[6] Born 1902, another of that galaxy of silent screen experimenters of the 1920's and an established director in subsequent decades. Like Romm, Yutkevich, and all the others to be mentioned below—except for Kalatazov—he is a Jew, and came under vicious attack in the late 40's for, among other things, "spreading and elaborating the false and un-Soviet myth that the American film director D. W. Griffith was the father of world film art."

[7] Should read Sutyrin. Vladimir A. Sutyrin, born 1902, a distinguished film critic and theoretician of the cinema.

[8] Nikolai Kovarsky. Also a distinguished film critic.

[9] Mikhail Bleiman. Born 1904. Highly successful screen writer until the late 40's.

[10] All the above were attacked at that time as a "group of aestheticizing cosmopolitans in the film industry, . . . miserable tramps of humanity, . . . homeless and nameless cosmopolitans of the cinema . . . base spokesmen of reactionary aestheticism . . . who conducted an organized slander campaign against its [the Soviet film's] lofty ideology, its truthfulness and its patriotic content."

[11] A major literary monthly, the stronghold of the literary Stalinists.

[12] Should read Kochetov. Vsevolod Kochetov. Born 1911. The Party's favorite Soviet novelist.

[13] Now defunct organ of the Writers Union of the Russian Republic, a consistent Stalinist paper.

[14] Dmitri Starikov, a well-known Soviet literary critic, who, on September 27, eight days after the publication of "Babi Yar," published a violent attack on Yevtushenko. He accused him of provocation and of a "monstrous" insult to the Soviet people, and of nurturing chauvinism and fanning the "dying flames of nationalist attitudes."

[15] Alexei Markov, author of a poem which attacked Yevtushenko for defiling the Russian people with "pygmy's spittle."

[16] Shown here as *The Letter That Was Never Sent.*

[17] Better known here as *The Cranes Are Flying.*

[18] The most recent film, 1961, directed by Romm.

[19] Yuli Reisman. Born 1903. Active as a leading screen director since the early 1920's. Won a Stalin Prize for his 1945 documentary, *Berlin.* Now again experimenting.

[20] Should read Kalatozov. Mikhail Kalatozov. Born 1903, a Georgian. Major film director and administrator. Surrealistic in early 1920's and up to 1930, then became orthodox. In post-Stalin period, director of *The Cranes Are Flying* and *The Letter That Was Never Sent,* the latter of which was considerably revised by censors.

[21] Boris Polevoi, famous novelist, also editor of *Yunost* ("Youth"), a literary journal.

[22] Inna Solovieva, film historian, published the volume, *Neo-Realism in Italian Movies* in 1961 (Moscow).

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DAVID T. BAZELON

NON-RULE IN AMERICA

THE FIRST great issue in American history was whether we were to have a federal government at all; its final resolution took about a hundred years. The second great issue of American history—which remains unresolved after another hundred years—is whether the federal government, now that we have it, is ever going to be allowed to govern.

There are two major and two minor exceptions to this formula for our history. To wage war and conduct some of the other foreign relations has always been the function of the national power. Without the pressure proceeding from these imperatives, the national government, once it had completed its second major function—namely, to assist in collecting and disbursing the lands of the continent—would probably have become purely ceremonial. As for the two minor exceptions, the first has been to contribute to the managing of the liberties and welfare of the population, while the second—and potentially most important—has been the role of the national government, inherited from the bankers in the Great Depression, in averting the domestic economic disaster which lies just beyond a conventional slowdown of production.

All other purposes and non-purposes of the federal government have been converging on this last power/purpose, and around it are currently expressed, repressed, distorted, and contained the major dynamisms of our history. We now have a country and an economy neither of which works adequately without somewhat more positive central authority than we have been accustomed to. However, we long ago decided to tolerate central government only or mostly as it dispenses favors and benefits; so that has become its characteristic manner of ruling, when it rules.

I take it as absolutely self-evident that the technological society called the United States is too big and too complex, too dynamic existentially and metaphysically too desperate, to continue to exist—adequately forearmed against disaster—under the jurisdiction of the inherited principles and techniques of non-government. From this self-evident premise, I deduce a crisis. The ideological ground of the crisis is, in essence, our profoundly absurd idea that money is a thing in itself, that there is never enough of it, that it is a private matter, and that the federal government, being public, should therefore have as little to do with it as possible. This is a long subject, and I have discussed it elsewhere*. But what mainly concerns us here is the institutional basis of the crisis, which is located for our day in Congress. For it is here that our refusal or inability to become a coherent nation is most clearly manifested.

It is perhaps no coincidence that the blockading role of Congress has fallen primarily upon the House of Representatives, which was designed constitutionally to exercise the original jurisdiction in fiscal matters. The Senate, which was supposed to decelerate expression of the popular will, has become the more "liberal" chamber, notwithstanding the power of filibuster.† The design has thus been inverted. (According to Neil MacNeil in *Forge of Democracy,* since 1939 the Senate has increased House appropriations by close to $3 billion annually—$32 billion in the last ten years.)

But the *entire* constitutional design—not merely the relation of the House to the upper chamber—is now badly out of whack, because of the profound backwardness of the House of Representatives. The Supreme Court has been dangerously burdened with political initiatives by the necessity of taking up the Congressional slack (the alterna-

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* See *The Paper Economy,* selections from which were published in COMMENTARY for September, October, and November 1962.

† The Senate is more "liberal," because the characteristic county-type malapportionment in the House is avoided; but less "liberal" basically because New York and Nevada both have two representatives in the chamber.

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tive, however, would have been disastrous—to revise the Constitution in favor of Congressional ineptitude). And as for the Executive Branch, I would briefly describe it as alternately benumbed and hysterical. It is becoming nearly impossible to preserve even a meaningful semblance of domestic executive leadership, despite the immense energies being devoted thereto by the current administration. The country simply cannot be run by executive order and publicity—a legislature is required as well. But instead of a legislature prepared to use national power in a positive fashion to deal with existing problems, we have non-rule by Congress. We have come, in short, to a historical dead stop.

A REVEALING symptom of our condition is the fact that almost every political question in America is argued on metaphysical, not political, grounds—the issue is never *how* power is to be used, but *whether* it is to exist at all or its existence acknowledged when it does. Since politics is concerned entirely and exclusively with the uses of power, it is possible to say that we have not yet arrived at politics in this country; we are still carrying on the work of the Founding Fathers—that is, creating an American system in which the uses of power may eventually be discussed and the thing itself, politics, occur.

This negative view of power is perhaps the distinctive aspect of the American character. It subsumes our notorious Puritanism, but is not limited to it. It relates to the Puritanism in that all private power—whether exercised by you in relation to your child or by the management of General Motors with respect to the structure of urban life—is so completely overjustified from a spiritual point of view that in practice it is no longer recognized as "power" at all. (The proof is in trying to use the very word in discussing any of these private relations: people respond as if they had been insulted.) But this Puritan moralism has become so hard-pressed by the challenges of modern complexity that it now requires a kind of paranoid screen on which to project a negative image of the power it fears to acknowledge. And that negative image is the federal government. (Only war, which opens up the perspective of external hostility, is exempt from this classic prescription.) The radical right-wingers are nearly as paranoid about our own government as they are about the Soviet government—and they are simply worse than the rest of us, not all that different at bottom.

The national power which our history has denied us is desperately needed today—it is quite likely a matter of life and death. On two counts, one domestic and the other worldwide. The first has been mentioned: an advancing technological society cannot exist ungoverned; without more coherent government than we have now, we will end up crushing each other—eventually physically, as now psychologically. With more and more people living together in increasingly complicated and interdependent patternings made possible and imperative by the technology and its astounding historical pace, fewer areas of social life can safely remain free of governing. Each time we wait for problems to solve themselves we deny the palpable world around us, thus seeking a disaster we must ultimately find. Health, education, employment, the organization of our living and working areas, along with the development of the scientific technology which is the source of all our blessings and troubles—all these require some decisive support or control by the national government, some positive use of central power.

In the second, worldwide arena, the matter is obviously a daily one of life and death, and with the current primary reliance on military posture, it must remain so. In the absence of further and deeper agreements with the Soviets, the only road forward is that of non-military initiatives; also, the more agreement we achieve, the more such initiatives—based on our domestic power—will dominate the world scene. Here lies the true unilateral path. This is the only way to force the Soviets to agree, or to deal with the abiding conflict after they agree. If we were to adapt the army, say, to the purposes of massive developmental aid, or build a new technical organization to dispense and utilize $10 or $20 billion annually in this kind of "war," the Soviets would have to respond in kind. This would certainly make them more amenable to arms reduction, since they are not nearly equal to us in over-all capacity and would be hard put to find the necessary resources. We would in effect be "spending them into submission"—or, at least, reasonableness. The idea of spending them into submission is regularly advanced in support of all new or redundant armament. To spend them into submission by means of developmental aid would be infinitely more effective and desirable from all points of view. But this alternative is not available to us, we are told, because the need is not recognized, or because the power does not exist, or because it would be improper to use the power for that purpose. Or, when the argument gets hot, all three at the same time.

Note the horribly bloated role of the military motif in overcoming, for what one might call subsistance purposes, the negative view of federal

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power. There is hardly a problem-area where the military umbrella has not at last been raised. From the hospital system of the Veterans Administration through the maze of general spending-support to the fostering of technological advance itself, the force of the military excuse and distortion is omnipresent. Defense needs have been the keystone of effective national policy, both domestic and foreign, since the New Deal ended in the recession of 1937–8. In its proportionate relation to population and GNP, the non-military role of the federal government has actually declined since that time.

To this juncture has our history brought us. The issue: to be not merely a geographical federation of constituencies, but a nation—and that for more than military reasons or by military means. Reading American history with hindsight, our deepest difficulty has been the sustained positive use of national power—to an extent that nations with more duration and less land can hardly imagine.

It seems that the whole conscious segment of the country is now being shocked into awareness of the role of Congress as the torch-bearer of American power-negativism. All of a sudden—perhaps because the initial verve and top-flight press releases of the Kennedy administration cruelly revived memories of the New Deal—everyone has realized that domestic amelioration and reform have been almost entirely blocked, tabled, dribbled out, and distorted for a full quarter-century. The military umbrella had previously obscured this major fact. Yet I would suggest that the fact which has been obscured is a cultural, even spiritual one, and not a matter of how the seniority system works. For Congress expresses the profounder contradictory meanings in our history. It dominates the Judiciary as statute is superior to decision; and the Executive can initiate for the most part only ideologically when it does not carry the Congress. It is easy for the Executive or the Judiciary to make believe we are a nation, but it is impossible for Congress to do so. Where Congress acts, there a nation acted. There is no distortion and no backwardness in, around, and under our nationhood which is not represented and overrepresented in Congress. Therefore Congress cannot possibly be viewed as an unfortunate collection of technical details. Congress is, indeed, the major structural problem in our history, and never more so than today. *But structural means spiritual, not technical*—although this is the hardest proposition for an American to understand, with his traditional confounding of the two categories. What is wrong with Congress is wrong with us. The crisis of this institution is a crisis of American character and personality. Congressional non-rule perfectly expresses our personal unwillingness to abandon our adored image of infinite individualism, and enter gracefully, or at least energetically, into a generous age of technological abundance.

In a practical way, the indictment of Congress reads as follows: in the first place, not every citizen has an equal chance to achieve representation; and in the second place, even if he did, Congress is not adequately organized to create or effectuate the majority will of such properly selected representatives. The first is an ancient but worsening scandal; we soften the point of it by imagining ourselves to be more homogeneous than we are—but the Negroes have lately been making our heterogeneity harder to deny. So far as the second consideration is concerned, it may be a decade or more before we mature to a cultural-political level at which it could frustrate us in its own right.

The unrepresentative quality of our system of representation derives from direct and total, as well as partial and indirect, disenfranchisement. Briefly, the de facto system favors whites over Negroes, rural over urban, permanent residents over mobile types (especially permanent residents of sparsely populated areas), and, of course, the wealthy over the poor. Clearly, it favors the more conservative groups. So much so that, with their vested attachment to the present imbalance, the belief and willingness of conservatives to participate in the formal democratic system are being or have been undermined. That is most obviously the tragedy of the South—but it is not limited to that area. Southerners are not the only Americans to have become so accustomed to unfair advantages that they can no longer bear to contemplate the possibility of fair disadvantages—which is, of course, an essential of a democratic order.

The worst of the whole matter is the coerced denial of the right of Negroes to vote in the South. This aspect of the de facto system does not exist even under an excuse of law. White voting registrars simply refuse to register Negroes: when the point needs to be driven home, the lawlessness of the white community—working through the police or through volunteers—accomplishes whatever may be needed. Jobs are lost, loans are called, arrests are made, shots are fired. Whatever may be needed. The result is an *ad hoc* apartheid shaped in a deadly social battle by the Southern activists against both the conscience of the nation and the legal/police power of the federal government. In a way, it is worse than South Africa—worse for the whites, I mean. Because the black-and-white spiri-

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tual triumph of the white, which is the whole point of the absurd effort, is ever-beckoning, ever-denied. The entire purpose of racialism is to simplify life, but the white Southerners have in fact complicated everything almost beyond bearing. After a while, all that is left to them in this impossible situation is to wallow in the process of losing—and, by their own unspeakable definition, losing *everything,* not merely the pleasures of racialism. (Meanwhile, the Negroes go to pieces in the process of winning, because they also foolishly defined their victory as "everything.")

The struggle of the Negroes is the most exhilarating since the labor push of the 30's. It is also much more extensive than many of us have realized. For example, the issue of poverty—the deeply disgusting issue of poverty in this wealthy nation—is a live one politically almost only as it is a subsumed part of the general Negro movement. Likewise, the massive and mounting issue of technological unemployment. Moreover, the positive bid of one-tenth of the population to overcome deprivation which ranges from the most brutal material factors to the spiritual heights of mis-identity with a white God, must inevitably affect the whole white culture.

The Negroes, with their black skin as a battle-flag, may save this nation yet (I say "nation" because they insist on it). It is they who suffer most from the American dream—they are the only true believers left. The Negro movement is a religious movement, and it seems almost powerful enough to sweep the country along with it to a new spiritual level. It is religious because it requires for its own fulfillment that the whites become better people—the Negroes are not really interested in greasy hamburgers, white toilets, and another Ralph Bunche. This is the persuasive underlying truth that the Black Muslims (by denying the possibility) rely on, and that so agitates the immense talent of James Baldwin, who was and remains a greatly gifted preacher exquisitely poised above the emotional eddies of black and white. The Negroes are a small part of the population, however, and I feel their gift will always be primarily a cultural one. Their skin makes them spiritual witnesses to the current state of the white man's belief and practice. Their skin can change only in the white man's eye, just as it was created in the white man's eye. Being thus doomed, and carrying an incommensurate historical hatred, they can allow us peace only when we allow them to escape into middle-class comfort. Before that happens, the nation will have been transformed. The poor will have been raised, the unemployed hired, and practical justice of a kind proffered to many city and country victims.

The Negroes can be expected to provide a radical leavening for some time, until new comfort joins with old discouragement, and a generation settles. But if before they burn out they manage to register enough voters in the South, with federal assistance, they may well have given us a decisive turn in our political life. No matter how badly gerrymandered against them Congressional districts may be, and therefore how few Congressmen they actually elect, the time will come when state-wide candidates will have to deal with Negro blocs in Southern states. The cities are even more deeply at odds with rural districts in the South than elsewhere in the country; eventually, then, the urban and Negro blocs will together elect governors and senators. Moreover, as the Southern diehards are isolated by the continued application of federal pressure, the ordinary Southern whites will be freed from their extremist political tyranny, and will then have an opportunity to develop more normal brokerage-politics on the regular American model. It will be important at that time for the Negroes to have something to trade—namely registered, deliverable voters. Remember, it was Negro voting in the North, following the war migrations, which prepared the basis for the present movement.

However, the disenfranchisement which supports non-rule by Congress goes far beyond the parochial apartheid of the South. Most significantly, it concerns malapportionment of Congressional districts selectively across the land, which makes one man's vote worth a great deal more than the vote of another. The man with the more worthwhile vote always lives in a rural area. The apportionment patterns give full representation to our vanished farm population and the culture once sustained by it. They give power to place rather than persons—and "place" means the remnant ideology of a way of life that very few people any longer live. The facts are truly amazing. In fifteen states, the difference between the smallest and largest district is approximately equal to the apportionment factor itself—410,000 persons for each Representative. The difference between the smallest and largest in the whole country in the 87th Congress—1,015,460 for an urban district in California and 177,431 for a rural one in Michigan—was more than twice the factor. (In New York this difference came to 645,952.)

THE most dramatic characterization of the related situation in the state legislatures came from Professor Charles L. Black, Jr. of the Yale Law School in a recent discussion of the proposed Constitutional amendment which has already been

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sneaked through in twelve states and whose purpose is to return plenary power over voting to the states. (The campaign is almost as clever as it is disgusting: being based on the obvious community of interest of rural-dominated state legislatures and the traditional states-righters of the South, the amendment is being pushed through outside the South to escape the racist stigmata, while the Southern states are mostly holding their fire.) Professor Black has estimated that this amendment, if passed, would allow amendment of the Constitution with the support of only 15 per cent of the total American population (under the present provision, two-thirds of Congress must approve or provide for amendments). The figuring goes like this: the Constitution can be amended by thirty-eight states; the thirty-eight least populous states have 40 per cent of the population; on the average, 38 per cent of the voters—because of intrastate malapportionment—can select a majority of a state legislature; 38 per cent of 40 per cent is 15 per cent of the whole.*

This despicable campaign is a last-ditch counter-attack against the great decision of the Supreme Court in *Baker* v. *Carr,* the Tennessee reapportionment case, handed down March 26, 1962. Since that date, suits have been filed in thirty-six states, apportionment provisions determined to be invalid in nineteen states, and some reapportionment already carried out in fifteen states. Nothing like this has ever happened before. The New York *Times* calls it a revolution, and the New York *Times* is right. Pretty clearly, a house of cards is tumbling. As with the segregation decision, the Court has commanded a direction rather than having set down a prescription. It did not say, "One man, one vote," and it did not say either/or on federal reapportionment in Congressional elections. (Future-directed vagueness is not merely a judicial habit: it is an element of judicial power.) But since state legislatures malapportion Congressional districts in their own image, the tide has turned decisively (even if the Court refuses jurisdiction of a particular case, or decides adversely†).

* Being forced to choose, for the length of one essay, between factual demonstration and speculative elaboration, I have naturally gone along with the latter. The argument as to the significance of numerical malapportionment can, I am sure, become quite complicated. Let it. When the conservatives defend it (*and* the accompanying gerrymander) with less ferocity in practice, I will listen with more interest to their arguments in theory that fair numerical apportionment would not make any real difference anyway. As for theoretical arguments justifying malapportionment, they are beneath contempt.

† It has accepted two for argument at the fall term in 1963.

Beyond malapportionment lies gerrymandering; beyond gerrymandering lies the character of campaign financing; beyond that and election there is the encounter with the seniority system, the Rules Committee in the House, and the filibuster in the Senate, and much more of that sort of negative power. And beyond all this is the capstone of structural issues: the business discipline and ideological coherence of the party system; for the sloppy characterlessness of our national parties derives from the underlying structural mess. Then the final issue—the relation between elected governmental power and the power of business, finance, and other private institutions. In confronting these issues and controlling the military, we can become a coherent democratic nation. And not until then.

Quite a program. It will not be pursued, if at all, in an orderly fashion: a little here, a little there, occasionally an awareness that something really significant has happened while everybody was milling around in a discouraged way; then, with the big-city breakthrough, an accelerating momentum. On the basic existential level, the cities have already "broken through," and quite dynamically—the problem being to bring these new life-conditions to political expression. It will happen. Not without further (and accelerating) degeneration and crisis—but that is already well under way.

Take, as an example of breakthrough, the big-city Reform movement in the Democratic party. It is huffing and puffing and blowing down the burned-out structures of the old neighborhood organizations based on immigrant illiteracy. It is doing this, so far, with little more than the impetuous hostility of disgruntled *arrivés:* the movement was so little prepared for its success, in an emotional or ideological or organizational sense, that it may only fly up the flue—a new version of the fate of the old municipal do-gooders and mugwumps. In New York City, for instance, the Reformers suffer from a hilarious form of purism whereby they are rent from end-to-end on issues like the support of electable candidates and the ten-foot-pole approach to patronage. They don't yet want to win; in a distorted fashion, they have their own version of the traditional American power-negativism. But the point not to be missed is that their impetuous victories came so easily. In California they were an essential influence in the re-shaping of that volatile state (including a professionally executed Democratic gerrymander). Understandably, their efforts did not result in the desired dictatorship of the educated consumer—but these efforts did make

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a great deal of difference. They are very important leavening: if the Reformers understood their role, they would be even more important. Being halfway people culturally, understanding dampens their enthusiasm, which is all the fun).

Despite the adolescent militancy of the Democratic Reformers, I want to suggest, again speculatively, that the right-wingers are providing the more substantial impetus toward party realignment or other political advance. In Congress, where it really counts, the parties have already been realigned de facto, thanks to the right-wingers. Even more important, they have the money—as limitless as Texas oil and local real estate. They are smarter than one might think in spending it, too: it is reported that the Birchers are concentrating on sparsely populated Western states where a dollar goes further in buying a new Senator. Also, the pressure of events—once more, with the Negro as catalyst—has been forcing the right-wingers together irrespective of formal party affiliation. They are mostly isolating themselves, however, which is the beginning of political death; for while such isolation concentrates and purifies ideologically, it exposes practical weakness at the same time. Once the country learns they are weak. . . . And remember, it happened with McCarthy. The bulwark against formal realignment is that it's more trouble than it's worth, since a formal party is meaningful and useful only nationally, and the right-wingers hardly think about that (outside of the "national" Congress, where party discipline is sufficiently ineffective to leave them all the scope they need). But Senator Strom Thurmond is officially for a realignment, and so, it appears, is Senator Karl Mundt. It would happen very quickly once the troglodytes lost their major party seniority in Congress; it may happen, even if slowly, by the attrition of history.

The idea that the country doesn't want the so-called "liberal" legislation which since 1938 it has been the function of Congress to frustrate, is nicely and regularly disproved by the fact that no one (apparently not even Barry Goldwater) dares to run for President—and indeed many statewide offices—without substantially endorsing such legislation. And if the Republicans ever try, it will be the last time. It is culturally distressing to have to call this a "liberal" program in the first place. Each generation, it would seem, must fight its battles on terrain selected by the previous generation—there is no hope for it. But this is no reason not to recognize the embarrassing fact that major elements of the American Frustrated Program are being administered today by *conservatives* throughout Europe.

Because of our system of non-rule, we have in one bundle the old and new problems of Europe—many of the social-welfare issues and industry-articulation matters that Europe dealt with some time ago, plus the deeper and more difficult questions of long-term redistribution of income with which Europe is having at least as much trouble as we are. In America, all of these have come together under the primary non-rule issue of federal deficit financing, also known by the fighting slogans of a balanced budget, fiscal responsibility, and that final metaphor for the backside of the moon, a stable dollar. The cultured pearls which make up Congressional wisdom concerning deficit financing are the open-mouthed despair of the majority of economists in the country. But I want to make the heretical suggestion that this organized, purposeful stupidity is founded on genuine cunning. Reasonable fiscal policy and planning, in the conservative style of Europe, would mostly miss the American point. The owners and rulers abroad are "protected" by a lack of resources, and on the other hand, must get the most out of the system to forestall serious redistribution. Here, there is too much abundance to allow the redistribution problem to be brought clearly forward, and any increase in efficiency would create so much additional abundance that the problem would become so clear it would not have to be brought forward. To put the case another way: we have and can have so much here that simple distribution of physical product *without* the difficulties of redistribution of wealth would nearly suffice. Given federal deficit financing, enough additional product can be created so that none need be diverted from present recipients. Eventually, however, we will have to redistribute principal or capital paper in America, but mainly to account for the federal deficit which otherwise would grow endlessly and finally defeat its own purpose. The main thing about the deficit is that it takes unused money and spends it; but in the payment of interest it recreates more unused money. It is this latter effect which must be controlled, otherwise the point will be reached where the deficit reverses its intended effect. But a $20 billion annual deficit for a decade would hardly begin the process (it would hardly do the necessary spending job, either).

The acceptance of deficit financing by the Federal government for non-military purposes is, in fact, the beginning of a liquidation of our traditional system—or at least of the traditional view of our system. More precisely, it would be a major step forward in a process of liquidation which is already well under way. But it is that one step

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which convinces you that you are really now on the road. Deficit financing goes beyond what taxes and the corporations have done to alter the property system: it confronts the major historical matter of the *rentiers*. That is why it is being fought so frantically throughout our society. Also, it is the issue par excellence for the non-rulers. They lead the fight with such desperate effectiveness because non-rulers must non-rule—they lose power decisively by joining in genuine rule. The blockade against federal spending is the common denominator of the non-rulers' frustration of the whole "liberal" program. Abhorrence of a deficit is the always available reason for saying "No!"

The largest and most enduring political/cultural question in the United States, however, is the relation between the backwardness enthroned in Congress and the basic industrial-financial power in the country. The relation of Congressmen to local business interests seems painfully clear. But what about the managers of big business? Is Congressional backwardness a social/political camouflage for big business? Or is the corporate power culturally incapable of confronting the social base of Congress? Or is it both—in that business may utilize the camouflage because it cannot overcome the backwardness? Take General Electric, and you have one answer: with IBM and Ford, perhaps another. The model may be the relation of big business to smaller firms in the NAM, where the screaming of the free enterprisers is clearly a screen of noise to obscure the bigger, surer managerial power in the background.

It is the ingrained irresponsibility of big national business that complicates the matter. They may have done nothing about what Congress is doing to the country for the simple and absurd reason that it has not occurred to enough of them that it is anything but the other fellow's problem. Irresponsibility of this high order, however, creates irrelevance, so that their dominant power ends up immobilized.

The deepest "malapportionment" of all, then, is this profound structural irresponsibility of corporate power. Power is quantitatively limited: if they have it, whether or not they use it, it means that we don't have it even if we would use it. The big corporations are exaggeratedly frightened of federal power in the abstract, but deal with it easily and well enough for their own limited purposes (*vide,* military procurement). Perhaps they are so preoccupied with their cat-and-mouse maneuvering *vis-à-vis* the Executive that they have not gotten around to noticing Congress as a separate problem (also, things went so "smoothly" there in the past). More likely, they are so unreasonably fearful of the potential power of the Executive in relation to their own that they have not felt able to dispense institutionally with the native troops supplied by Congressional suzerains, just as they have not been bold enough ideologically to dispense with NAM balderdash.

If we assume that big corporate power is by and large unwilling or unable to assist in breaking the Congressional blockade, we still want to know how active they would become in support of it, should an attack from other quarters approach success. I don't think they would fight too hard to protect the Thurmonds and the Mundts. If for no other reason, they just don't think big enough. That may indeed turn out to be their historical epitaph. Which would be too bad: for what else is there that can serve as a ready, rational counterweight to an inevitably oversized federal power?

I DO NOT want to be taken as suggesting that politics is *all* structural-spiritual. By no means. My point is that we are at a peculiar and particular juncture, whereby certain rotten structural-spiritual timbers not only endanger the stability of the edifice, but also constitute an inviting push-over. The change I am talking about, moreover, is a big one only because it has been frustrated so long. A few billion dollars' worth a year of federal aid to education is not going to make all that much difference in the cultural quality of our lives; and a couple of billion a year well spent on medical training and facilities will still not cure cancer and heart disease. I am talking about *a fairly pallid majoritarianism*—just the minimal adjustment to the effects of a technological society, and particularly the urban and other quality-of-population problems created thereby. A truly intelligent and dynamic use of our abundant opportunities—the opportunities of technological abundance—is, I fear, quite beyond us. That will require a wait of at least one generation.

As Neil MacNeil advises us, the New Deal ended with the passage of the Wage and Hour Bill in 1938. That Congress also marks the beginning of the conservative coalition which has effectively non-ruled the country on domestic issues since then. In 1938, Sam Rayburn became majority leader, thus beginning his dominant historical role as the Great Broker of the Democratic party—which ended factually with his death, but even more importantly with his devoted leadership of the 1961 Rules Committee fight against "Judge" Smith. I am guessing that the brokerage system

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Rayburn presided over for nearly a quarter of a century was approaching its end, regardless of his personal fate, and wizard that he was. For two paramount reasons: the Negroes would not stand still for it much longer; and it was not good enough in the first place.

My point comes down to this: a shift of twenty to forty Representatives could in some degree redetermine American, and thus world, history. This is not a proposition that can be "proved" abstractly. It will have to be tested. Not that history is determined or redetermined by mechanical means; it is simply that the House of Representatives is currently the front-line of the political problem, and the problem is there susceptible to solution by a small shift. Now, "counting the House" for general purposes is a complex and perhaps hopeless task (on specific bills it is counted regularly and with great accuracy). Social forces do not express themselves neatly in the ideology and voting records of individual Representatives: I assume that there will always be a swing-group in the House, and the House will always be a brokerage agency. But again, the present structural situation is so out of whack that these obvious facts of political life do not obtrude at the threshold of the immediate problem. The House has passed or rejected President Kennedy's domestic measures with notably close margins. In the Rules Committee fight in the 87th Congress, the final vote was 217–212, the official or formal bloc membership being 174 Republicans, 162 Northern and Western Democrats, and 99 Democrats from the Southern states. When the President counted the House after his election (according to MacNeil), he found 180 for him and 180 against on his general domestic program, with seventy-odd "negotiable." The "negotiables" are mostly urban Republicans and some populist-minded rural types, both South and West.

The underlying problem, I have suggested, is that we have a negative view of power and we have not yet succeeded to our nationhood. But we may be closer than we realize to achieving a grossly realized national power capable of dealing with the Frustrated American Program. (That achievement is also the basis of a serious national culture, incidentally, as well as of serious legitimation of national corporate power.) The Negroes, the courts, and the new activity of the educated masses are enough, I hope and I believe, shortly to overcome the narrow margin remaining between us and our nationhood. The alternative would be a deadly drama indeed.

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PHILIP ROTH

WRITING ABOUT JEWS

EVER SINCE some of my first stories were published in 1959 in a volume called *Goodbye, Columbus,* my work has been attacked from certain pulpits and in certain periodicals as dangerous, dishonest, and irresponsible. I have read editorials and articles in Jewish community newspapers condemning these stories for ignoring the accomplishments of Jewish life, or, as Rabbi Emanuel Rackman recently told a convention of the Rabbinical Council of America, for creating a "distorted image of the basic values of Orthodox Judaism," and even, he went on, for denying the non-Jewish world the opportunity of appreciating "the overwhelming contributions which Orthodox Jews are making in every avenue of modern endeavor. . . ." Among the letters I receive from readers, there have been a number written by Jews accusing me of being anti-Semitic and "self-hating," or, at the least, tasteless; they argue or imply that the sufferings of the Jews throughout history, culminating in the murder of six million by the Nazis, have made certain criticisms of Jewish life insulting and trivial. Furthermore, it is charged that such criticism as I make of Jews—or apparent criticism—is taken by anti-Semites as justification for their attitudes, as "fuel" for their fires, particularly as it is a Jew himself who seemingly admits to habits and behavior that are not exemplary, or even normal and acceptable. When I speak before Jewish audiences, invariably there have been people who have come up to me afterward to ask, "Why don't you leave us alone? Why don't you write about the Gentiles?"—"Why must you be so critical?"—"Why do you disapprove of us so?"—this last question asked as often with incredulity as with anger; and often when asked by people a good deal older than myself, asked as of an erring child by a loving but misunderstood parent.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to explain to some of the people claiming to have felt my teeth sinking in, that in many instances they haven't been bitten at all. Not always, but frequently, what readers have taken to be my disapproval of the lives lived by Jews seems to have to do more with their own moral perspective than with the one they would ascribe to me: at times they see wickedness where I myself had seen energy or courage or spontaneity; they are ashamed of what I see no reason to be ashamed of, and defensive where there is no cause for defense.

Not only do they seem to me often to have cramped and untenable notions of right and wrong, but looking at fiction as they do—in terms of "approval" and " disapproval" of Jews, "positive" and "negative" attitudes toward Jewish life—they are likely not to see what it is that the story is really about.

To give an example. A story I wrote called "Epstein" tells of a sixty-year-old man who has an adulterous affair with the lady across the street. In the end, Epstein, who is the hero, is caught—caught by his family and caught and struck down by exhaustion, decay, and disappointment, against all of which he had set out to make a final struggle. There are Jewish readers, I know, who cannot figure out why I found it necessary to tell this story about a Jewish man: don't other people commit adultery, too? Why is it the Jew who must be shown cheating?

But there is more to adultery than cheating: for one thing, there is the adulterer himself. For all that some people may experience him as a cheat and nothing else, he usually experiences himself as something more. And generally speaking, what draws most readers and writers to literature is this "something more"—all that is beyond simple moral categorizing. It is not my purpose in writing a story of an adulterous man to make it clear how right we all are if we disapprove of the act and are disappointed in the man. Fiction is not written to affirm the principles and beliefs that everybody seems to hold, nor does it seek to guarantee us of the appropriateness of our feelings. The world of fiction, in fact, frees us from the circumscriptions that the society places upon feeling; one of the greatnesses of the art is that it allows both the writer and the reader to respond to experience in ways not always available in day-to-day conduct; or if they are available, they are not possible, or manageable, or legal, or advisable, or even necessary to the business of living. We may not even know that we have such a range of feelings and responses *until* we have come into contact with the

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work of fiction. This does not mean that either reader or writer no longer brings any moral judgment to bear upon human action. Rather, we judge at a different level of our being, for not only are we judging with the aid of new feelings, but without the necessity of having to act upon judgment, or even to be judged for our judgment. Ceasing for a while to be upright citizens, we drop into another layer of consciousness. And this dropping, this expansion of moral consciousness, this exploration of moral fantasy, is of considerable value to a man and to society.

I do not care to go at length here into what a good many readers take for granted are the purposes and possibilities of fiction. I do want to make clear, however, to those whose interests may not lead them to speculate much on the subject, a few of the assumptions a writer may hold—assumptions such as lead me to say that I do not write a story to make evident whatever disapproval I may feel for adulterous men. I write a story of a man who is adulterous to reveal the condition of such a man. If the adulterous man is a Jew, then I am revealing the condition of an adulterous man who is a Jew. Why tell that story? Because I seem to be interested in how —and why and when—a man acts counter to what he considers to be his "best self," or what others assume it to be, or would like for it to be. The subject is hardly "mine"; it interested readers and writers for a long time before it became my turn to be engaged by it, too.

One of my readers, a man in Detroit, was himself not too engaged and suggested in a letter to me that he could not figure out why I was. He posed several questions which I believe, in their very brevity, were intended to disarm me. I quote from his letter without his permission.

The first question. "Is it conceivable for a middle-aged man to neglect business and spend all day with a middle-aged woman?" The answer is yes.

Next he asks, "Is it a Jewish trait?" I take it he is referring to adultery and not facetiously to the neglecting of business. The answer is, "Who said it was?" Anna Karenina commits adultery with Vronsky, with consequences more disastrous than those that Epstein brings about. Who thinks to ask, "Is it a Russian trait?" It is a decidedly human possibility. Even though the most famous injunction against it is reported as being issued, for God's own reasons, to the Jews, adultery has been one of the ways by which people of *all* faiths have sought pleasure, or freedom, or vengeance, or power, or love, or humiliation. . . .

The next in the gentleman's series of questions to me is, "Why so much *shmutz?*" Is he asking, why is there dirt in the world? Why is there disappointment? Why is there hardship, ugliness, evil, death? It would be nice to think these were the questions the gentleman had in mind, when he asks "Why so much *shmutz?*" But all he is really asking is, "Why so much *shmutz* in that story?" This, apparently, is what the story adds up to for him. An old man discovers the fires of lust are still burning in him? *Shmutz!* Disgusting! Who wants to hear that kind of stuff! Struck as he is by nothing but the dirty aspects of Epstein's troubles, the gentleman from Detroit concludes that I am narrow-minded.

So do others. Narrow-mindedness, in fact, was the charge that a New York rabbi, David Seligson, was reported in the New York *Times* recently as having brought against myself and other Jewish writers who, he told his congregation, dedicated themselves "to the exclusive creation of a melancholy parade of caricatures." Rabbi Seligson also disapproved of *Goodbye, Columbus* because I described in it "a Jewish adulterer . . . and a host of other lopsided schizophrenic personalities." Of course, adultery is not a characteristic symptom of schizophrenia, but that the rabbi should see it this way, as a sign of a diseased personality, indicates to me that we have different notions as to what health is. After all, it may be that *life* produces a melancholy middle-aged businessman like Lou Epstein who in Dr. Seligson's eyes looks like another in a parade of caricatures. I myself find Epstein's adultery an unlikely solution to his problems, a pathetic, even a doomed response, and a comic one, too, since it does not even square with the man's own conception of himself and what he wants; but none of this *unlikeliness* leads me to despair of his sanity, or humanity. I suppose it is tantamount to a confession from me of lopsided schizophrenia to admit that the character of Epstein happened to have been conceived with considerable affection and sympathy. As I see it, one of the rabbi's limitations is that he cannot recognize a bear hug when one is being administered right in front of his eyes.

THE *Times* report continues: "The rabbi said he could only 'wonder about' gifted writers, 'Jewish by birth, who can see so little in the tremendous saga of Jewish history.' " But I don't imagine the rabbi "wonders" anymore about me than I wonder about him: that wondering business is only the voice of wisdom that is supposed to be making itself heard, always willing to be shown the light, if, of course, there is light to be pointed out; but I can't buy it. Pulpit fair-mindedness only hides the issue—as it does here in the rabbi's conclusion, quoted by the *Times*: " 'That they [the Jewish writers in question] must be free to write, we would affirm most vehemently; but that they would know their own people and tradition, we would fervently wish.' "

However, the issue is not knowledge of one's "people." At least, it is not a question of who has more historical data at his fingertips, or is more familiar with Jewish tradition, or which of us observes more customs and rituals. It is even possible,

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needless to say, to "know" a good deal about tradition, and to misunderstand what it is that tradition signifies. The story of Lou Epstein stands or falls not on how much I "know" about tradition, but on how much I know and understand about Lou Epstein. Where the history of the Jewish people comes down in time and place to become the man whom I called Epstein, that is where my knowledge must be sound. But I get the feeling that Rabbi Seligson wants to rule Lou Epstein *out* of Jewish history. I find him too valuable to forget or dismiss, even if he is something of a *grubber yung* and probably more ignorant of history and tradition than the rabbi believes me to be.

Epstein is pictured not as a learned rabbi, after all, but the owner of a small paper-bag company; his wife is not learned either, and neither is his mistress; consequently, a reader should not expect to find in this story knowledge on my part, or the part of the characters, of the *Sayings of the Fathers*; he has every right to expect that I be close to the truth as to what might conceivably be the attitudes of a Jewish man of Epstein's style and history, toward marriage, family life, divorce, and fornication. The story is called "Epstein" because Epstein, not the Jews, is the subject; where the story is weak I think I know by this time; but the rabbi will never find out until he comes at the thing in terms of what *it* wants to be about rather than what he would like it to be about.

Obviously, though, his interest is not in the portrayal of character; what he wants in my fiction is, in his words, "a balanced portrayal of Jews as we know them." I even suspect that something called "balance" is what the rabbi would advertise as the most significant characteristic of Jewish life; what Jewish history comes down to is that at long last we have in our ranks one of everything. But his assumptions about the art of fiction are what I should like to draw particular attention to. In his sermon Rabbi Seligson says of Myron Kaufmann's *Remember Me to God,* that it can "hardly be said to be recognizable as a Jewish sociological study." But Mr. Kaufmann, as a novelist, probably had no intention of writing a sociological study, or—for this seems more like what the rabbi really yearns for in the way of reading—a nice positive sampling. *Madame Bovary* is hardly recognizable as a sociological study, either, having at its center only a single, dreamy, provincial Frenchwoman, and not one of every other kind of provincial Frenchwoman too; this does not, however, diminish its brilliance as a novel, as an exploration of Madame Bovary herself. Literary works do not take as their subjects characters and events which have impressed a writer primarily by the *frequency* of their appearance. For example, how many Jewish men, as we know them, have come nearly to the brink of plunging a knife into their only son because they believed God had commanded them to? The story of Abraham and Isaac derives its meaning from something other than its being a familiar, recognizable, everyday occurrence. The test of any literary work is not how broad is its range of representation—for all that breadth may be characteristic of a kind of narrative—but the depth with which the writer reveals whatever it may be that he has chosen to represent.

To confuse a "balanced portrayal" with a novel is finally to be led into absurdities. "Dear Fyodor Dostoevsky—All the students in our school, and most of the teachers feel that you have been unfair to us. Do you call Raskolnikov a balanced portrayal of students as we know them? Of Russian students? Of poor students? What about those of us who have never murdered anyone, who do our school work every night?" "Dear Mark Twain—None of the slaves on our plantation has ever run away. We have a perfect record. But what will our owner think when he reads of Nigger Jim?" "Dear Vladimir Nabokov—The girls in our class," and so on. What fiction does, and what the rabbi would like for it to do are two entirely different things. The concerns of fiction, let it be said, are not those of a statistician —or of a public-relations firm. The novelist asks himself, "What do people think?"; the PR man asks, "What *will* people think?" But I believe this is what is actually troubling the rabbi, when he calls for his "balanced portrayal of Jews." What will people think?

Or to be exact: what will the *goyim* think?

II

THIS WAS the question raised—and urgently—when another story of mine, "Defender of the Faith," appeared in the *New Yorker* in April 1959. The story is told by Nathan Marx, an Army sergeant just rotated back to Missouri from combat duty in Germany, where the war has ended. As soon as he arrives, he is made First Sergeant in a training company, and immediately is latched on to by a young recruit who tries to use his attachment to the sergeant to receive kindnesses and favors. His attachment, as he sees it, is that they are both Jews. As the story progresses, what the recruit, Sheldon Grossbart, comes to demand are not mere considerations, but privileges to which Marx does not think he is entitled. The story is about one man who uses his own religion, and another's uncertain conscience, for selfish ends; but mostly it is about this other man, the narrator, who because of the ambiguities of being a member of his particular religion, is involved in a taxing, if mistaken, conflict of loyalties.

I don't now, however, and didn't while writing, see Marx's problem as nothing more than "Jewish": confronting the limitations of charity and forgiveness in one's nature—having to draw a line between what is merciful and what is just—trying to distinguish between apparent evil and the real thing,

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in one's self and others—these are problems for most people, regardless of the level at which they are perceived or dealt with. Yet, though the moral complexities are not exclusively characteristic of the experience of being a Jew, I never for a moment considered that the characters in the story should be anything other than Jews. Someone else might have written a story embodying the same themes, and similar events perhaps, and had at its center Negroes or Irishmen; for me there was no choice. Nor was it a matter of making Grossbart a Jew and Marx a Gentile, or vice versa; telling half the truth would have been much the same here as telling a lie. Most of those jokes beginning, "Two Jews were walking down the street," lose a little of their punch if one of the Jews, or both, are disguised as Englishmen or Republicans. Similarly, to have made any serious alteration in the Jewish factuality of "Defender of the Faith" as it began to fill itself out in my imagination, would have so unsprung the tensions I felt in the story that I would no longer have had left a story that I wanted to tell, or one I believed myself able to.

Some of my critics must wish that this had happened, for in going ahead and writing this story about Jews, what else did I do but confirm an anti-Semitic stereotype? But to me the story confirms something different, if no less painful to its readers. To me Grossbart is not something we can dismiss solely as an anti-Semitic stereotype; he is a Jewish fact. If people of bad intention or weak judgment have converted certain facts of Jewish life into a stereotype of The Jew, that does not mean that such facts are no longer important in our lives, or that they are taboo for the writer of fiction. Literary investigation may even be a way to redeem the facts, to give them the weight and value that they should have in the world, rather than the disproportionate significance they probably have for some misguided or vicious people.

Sheldon Grossbart, the character I imagined as Marx's antagonist, has his seed in fact. He is not meant to represent The Jew, or Jewry, nor does the story indicate that it is the writer's intention that he be so understood by the reader. Grossbart is depicted as a single blundering human being, one with force, self-righteousness, cunning, and on occasion, even a little disarming charm; he is depicted as a man whose lapses of integrity seem to him so necessary to his survival as to convince him that such lapses are actually committed in the name of integrity. He has been able to work out a system whereby his own sense of responsibility can suspend operation, what with the collective guilt of the others having become so immense as to have seriously altered the conditions of trust in the world. He is presented not as the stereotype of The Jew, but as a Jew who acts like the stereotype, offering back to his enemies their vision of him, answering the punishment with the crime. Given the particular kinds of denials, humiliations, and persecutions that the nations have practiced on their Jews, it argues for far too much nobility to deny not only that Jews like Grossbart exist, but to deny that the temptations to Grossbartism exist in many who perhaps have more grace, or will, or are perhaps only more cowed, than the simple frightened soul that I imagined weeping with fear and disappointment at the end of the story. Grossbart is not The Jew; but he is a fact of Jewish experience and well within the range of its moral possibilities.

And so is his adversary, Marx, who is, after all, the story's central character, its consciousness and its voice. He is a man who calls himself a Jew more tentatively than does Grossbart; he is not sure what it means, means for him, for he is not unintelligent or without conscience; he is dutiful, almost to a point of obsession, and confronted by what are represented to him as the needs of another Jew, he does not for a while know what to do. He moves back and forth from feelings of righteousness to feelings of betrayal, and only at the end, when he truly does betray the trust that Grossbart tries to place in him, does he commit what he has hoped to all along: an act he can believe to be honorable.

Marx does not strike me, nor any of the readers I heard from, as unlikely, incredible, "made-up"; the verisimilitude of the characters and their situation was not what was called into question. In fact, an air of convincingness that the story was believed to have, caused a number of people to write to me, and the *New Yorker*, and the Anti-Defamation League, protesting its publication.

HERE IS one of the letters I received after the story was published:

Mr. Roth:

With your one story, "Defender of the Faith," you have done as much harm as all the organized anti-Semitic organizations have done to make people believe that all Jews are cheats, liars, connivers. Your one story makes people—the general public—forget all the great Jews who have lived, all the Jewish boys who served well in the armed services, all the Jews who live honest hard lives the world over. . . .

Here is one received by the *New Yorker:*

Dear Sir:

. . . We have discussed this story from every possible angle and we cannot escape the conclusion that it will do irreparable damage to the Jewish people. We feel that this story presented a distorted picture of the average Jewish soldier and are at a loss to understand why a magazine of your fine reputation should publish such a work which lends fuel to anti-Semitism.

Clichés like "this being Art" will not be acceptable. A reply will be appreciated.

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Here is a letter received by the Anti-Defamation League, who out of the pressure of the public response, telephoned to ask if I wanted to talk to them. The strange emphasis of the invitation, I thought, indicated the discomfort they felt at having to pass on—or believing they had to pass on—messages such as this:

> Dear ———,
> What is being done to silence this man? Medieval Jews would have known what to do with him. . . .

The first two letters I quoted were written by Jewish laymen, the last by a rabbi and educator in New York City, a man of prominence in the world of Jewish affairs.

The rabbi was later to communicate directly with me. He did not mention that he had already written the Anti-Defamation League to express regret over the decline of medieval justice, though he was careful to point out at the conclusion of his first letter his reticence in another quarter. I believe I was supposed to take it as an act of mercy: "I have not written to the editorial board of the *New Yorker*," he told me. "I do not want to compound the sin of informing. . . ."

INFORMING. There was the charge so many of the correspondents had made, even when they did not want to make it openly to me, or to themselves. I had informed on the Jews. I had told the Gentiles what apparently it would otherwise have been possible to keep secret from them: that the perils of human nature afflict the members of our minority. That I had also informed them it was possible for there to be such a Jew as Nathan Marx did not seem to bother anybody; if I said earlier that Marx did not strike my correspondents as unlikely, it is because he didn't strike them at all. He might as well not have been there. Of the letters that I read, only one even mentioned Marx and only to point out that I was no less blameworthy for portraying the Sergeant as "a white Jew" as he was described by my correspondent, a kind of Jewish Uncle Tom.

But even if Marx were that and only that, a white Jew, and Grossbart only a black one, did it in any way follow that because I had examined the relationship between them—another concern central to the story which drew barely a comment from my correspondents—that I had then advocated that Jews be denationalized, deported, persecuted, murdered? Well, no. Whatever the rabbi may believe privately, he did not indicate to me that he thought I was an anti-Semite. There was a suggestion, however, and a grave one, that I had acted like a fool. "You have earned the gratitude," he wrote, "of all who sustain their anti-Semitism on such conceptions of Jews as ultimately led to the murder of six million in our time."

Despite the sweep there at the end of the sentence, the charge made is actually up at the front: I "earned the gratitude. . . ." But of whom? I would put it less dramatically, but maybe more exactly: of those who are predisposed to misread the story—out of bigotry, ignorance, malice, or even innocence. If I did earn their gratitude, it was because they failed to see, even to look for, what I was talking about. . . . Such conceptions of Jews as anti-Semites hold, then, and as they were able to confirm by misunderstanding my story, are the same, the rabbi goes on to say, as those which "ultimately led to the murder of six million in our time."

"Ultimately"? Is that not a gross simplification of the history of the Jews and the history of Hitler's Germany? People hold serious grudges against one another, vilify one another, deliberately misunderstand one another, and tell lies about one another, but they do not always, as a consequence, *murder* one another, as the Germans murdered the Jews, and as other Europeans allowed the Jews to be murdered, or even helped the slaughter along. Between prejudice and persecution there is usually, in civilized life, a barrier constructed by the individual's convictions and fears, and the community's laws, ideals, and values. What "ultimately" caused this barrier to disappear in Germany cannot be explained only in terms of anti-Semitic misconceptions; surely what must also be understood here is the intolerability of Jewry, on the one hand, and its usefulness, on the other, to the Nazi ideology and dream.

By simplifying the Nazi-Jewish relationship, by making *prejudice* appear to be the primary cause of annihilation, the rabbi is able to make the consequences of publishing "Defender of the Faith" in the *New Yorker* seem very grave indeed. He doesn't appear to be made at all anxious, however, by the consequences of his own position. For what he is suggesting is that some subjects must not be written about, or brought to public attention, because it is possible for them to be misunderstood by people with weak minds or malicious instincts. Thus he consents to put the malicious and weak-minded in a position of determining the level at which open communication on these subjects will take place. This is not fighting anti-Semitism, but submitting to it: that is, submitting to a restriction of consciousness as well as communication because being conscious and being candid is too risky.

In his letter the rabbi calls my attention to that famous madman who shouts "Fire!" in "a crowded theater." He leaves me to complete the analogy myself: by publishing "Defender of the Faith" in the *New Yorker*: (1) I am shouting; (2) I am shouting "Fire!"; (3) there is no fire; (4) all this is happening in the equivalent of "a crowded theater." The crowded theater: there is the risk. I should agree to sacrifice the freedom that is essential to my vocation, and even to the general well-being of the

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culture, because—because of what? "The crowded theater" has absolutely no relevance to the situation of the Jew in America today. It is a grandiose delusion. It is not a metaphor describing a cultural condition, but a revelation of the nightmarish visions that must plague people as demoralized as the rabbi appears to be: rows endless, seats packed, lights out, doors too few and too small, panic and hysteria just under the skin. . . . No wonder he says to me finally, "Your story—in Hebrew—in an Israeli magazine or newspaper—would have been judged exclusively from a literary point of view." That is, ship it off to Israel. But please don't tell it here, now.

Why? So that "they" will not commence persecuting Jews again? If the barrier between prejudice and persecution collapsed in Germany, this is hardly reason to contend that no such barrier exists in our country. And if it should ever begin to appear to be crumbling, then we must do what is necessary to strengthen it. But not by putting on a good face; not by refusing to admit to the intricacies and impossibilities of Jewish lives; not by pretending that Jews have existences less in need of, less deserving of, honest attention than the lives of their neighbors; not by making Jews invisible. The solution is not to convince people to like Jews so as not to want to kill them; it is to let them know that they cannot kill them even if they despise them. And how to let them know? Surely repeating over and over to oneself, "It can happen here," does little to prevent "it" from happening. Moreover, ending persecution involves more than stamping out persecutors. It is necessary, too, to unlearn certain responses to them. All the tolerance of persecution that has seeped into the Jewish character—the adaptability, the patience, the resignation, the silence, the self-denial—must be squeezed out, until the only response there is to *any* restriction of liberties is "No, I refuse."

THE CHANCES are that there will always be some people who will despise Jews, just so long as they continue to call themselves Jews; and, of course, we must keep an eye on them. But if some Jews are dreaming of a time when they will be accepted by Christians as Christians accept one another—if *this* is why certain Jewish writers should be silent—it may be that they are dreaming of a time that cannot be, and of a condition that does not exist, this side of one's dreams. Perhaps even the Christians don't accept one another as they are imagined to in that world from which Jews may believe themselves excluded solely because they are Jews. Nor are the Christians going to feel toward Jews what one Jew may feel toward another. The upbringing of the alien does not always alert him to the whole range of human connections which exists between the liaisons that arise out of clannishness, and those that arise—or fail to—out of deliberate exclusion. Like those of most men, the lives of Jews no longer take place in a world that is just *landsmen* and enemies. The cry "Watch out for the *goyim*!" at times seems more the expression of an unconscious wish than of a warning: Oh that they were out there, so that we could be together in here! A rumor of persecution, a taste of exile, might even bring with it that old world of feelings and habits—something to replace the new world of social accessibility and moral indifference, the world which tempts all our promiscuous instincts, and where one cannot always figure out what a Jew is that a Christian is not.

Jews are people who are not what anti-Semites say they are. That was once a statement out of which a man might begin to construct an identity for himself; now it does not work so well, for it is difficult to act counter to the ways people expect you to act when fewer and fewer people define you by such expectations. The success of the struggle against the defamation of Jewish character in this country has itself made more pressing the need for a Jewish self-consciousness that is relevant to this time and place, where neither defamation nor persecution are what they were elsewhere in the past. Surely, for those Jews who choose to continue to call themselves Jews, and find reason to do so, there are courses to follow to prevent it from ever being 1933 again that are more direct, reasonable, and dignified than beginning to act as though it already is 1933—*or as though it always is.* But the death of all those Jews seems to have taught my correspondent, a rabbi and a teacher, little more than to be discreet, to be foxy, to say this but not that. It has taught him nothing other than how to remain a victim in a country where he does not have to live like one if he chooses. How pathetic. And what an insult to the dead. Imagine: sitting in New York in the 1960's and piously summoning up "the six million" to justify one's own timidity.

Timidity—and paranoia. It does not occur to the rabbi that there are Gentiles who will read the story intelligently. The only Gentiles the rabbi can imagine looking into the *New Yorker* are those who hate Jews and those who don't know how to read very well. If there are others, they can get along without reading about Jews. For to suggest that one translate one's stories into Hebrew and publish them in Israel, is to say, in effect: "There is nothing in our lives we need to tell the Gentiles about, unless it has to do with how well we manage. Beyond that, it's none of their business. We are important to no one but ourselves, which is as it should be (or better be) anyway." But to indicate that moral crisis is something to be hushed up, is not of course, to take the prophetic line; nor is it a rabbinical point of view that Jewish life is of no significance to the rest of mankind.

EVEN given his own kinds of goals, however, the rabbi is not very far-sighted or imaginative. What he fails to see is that the stereotype as often arises from ignorance as from malice; deliberately keeping

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Jews out of the imagination of Gentiles, for fear of the bigots and their stereotyping minds, is really to invite the invention of stereotypical ideas. A book like Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man,* for instance, seems to me to have helped many whites who are not anti-Negro, but who do hold Negro stereotypes, to surrender simple-minded notions about Negro life. I doubt, however, that Ellison, reporting as he does not just the squalid circumstances Negroes must put up with but certain bestial aspects of his Negro characters as well, has converted one Alabama redneck or one United States Senator over to the cause of desegregation; nor could the novels of James Baldwin cause Governor Wallace to conclude anything more than that Negroes were just as hopeless a lot as he'd always known them to be. As novelists, neither Baldwin nor Ellison are (to quote Mr. Ellison on himself) "cogs in the machinery of civil rights legislation." Just as there are Jews who feel that my books do nothing for the Jewish cause, so there are Negroes, I am led to understand, who feel that Mr. Ellison's work has done little for the Negro cause and probably has harmed it. But that seems to place the Negro cause somewhat outside the cause of truth and justice. That many blind people are still blind, does not mean that Mr. Ellison's book gives off no light. Certainly those of us who are willing to be taught, and who needed to be, have been made by *Invisible Man* less stupid than we were about Negro lives, including those lives that a bigot would point to as affirming his own half-baked, inviolable ideas.

III

But it is the treachery of the bigot that the rabbi appears to be worried about and that he presents to me, to himself, and probably to his congregation, as the major cause for concern. Frankly, I think those are just the old words coming out, when the right buttons are pushed. Can he actually believe that on the basis of my story anyone is going to start a pogrom, or keep a Jew out of medical school, or even call some Jewish schoolchild a kike? The rabbi is entombed in his nightmares and fears; but that is not the whole of it. He is also hiding something. Much of this disapproval of "Defender of the Faith" because of its effect upon Gentiles, seems to me a cover-up for what is really objected to, what is immediately painful—and that is its direct effect upon certain Jews. "You have hurt a lot of people's feelings because you have revealed something they are ashamed of." That is the letter the rabbi did not write, but should have. I would have argued then that there are things of more importance—even to these Jews—than those feelings that have been hurt, but at any rate he would have confronted me with a genuine fact, with something I was actually responsible for, and which my conscience would have had to deal with, as it does.

For the record, all the letters that came in about "Defender of the Faith," and that I saw, were from Jews. Not one of those people whose gratitude the rabbi believes I earned, wrote to say, "Thank you," nor was I invited to address any anti-Semitic organizations. When I did begin to receive speaking invitations, they were from Jewish ladies' groups, Jewish community centers, and from all sorts of Jewish organizations, large and small.

And I think this bothers the rabbi, too. On the one hand, some Jews are hurt by my work; but on the other, some are interested. At the rabbinical convention I mentioned earlier, Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, a professor of political science at Yeshiva University, reported to his colleagues that certain Jewish writers were "assuming the mantle of self-appointed spokesmen and leaders for Judaism." To support this remark he referred to a symposium held in Israel this last June, at which I was present; as far as I know, Rabbi Rackman was not. If he had been there, he would have heard me make it quite clear that I did not want to, did not intend to, and was not able to, speak *for* American Jews; I surely did not deny, and no one questioned the fact, that I spoke *to* them, and hopefully to others as well. The competition that Rabbi Rackman imagines himself to be engaged in hasn't to do with who will presume to lead the Jews; it is really a matter of who, in addressing them, is going to take them more seriously—strange as that may sound—with who is going to see them as something more than part of the mob in a crowded theater, more than helpless and threatened and in need of reassurance that they are as "balanced" as anyone else. The question really is, who is going to address men and women like men and women, and who like children. If there are Jews who have begun to find the stories the novelists tell more provocative and pertinent than the sermons of some of the rabbis, perhaps it is because there are regions of feeling and consciousness in them which cannot be reached by the oratory of self-congratulation and self-pity.

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JOHN MANDER

WEST AFRICAN DIARY

Lagos, Nigeria: June 17.

First night in Lagos: an infernal hotel—it shall be nameless—with a room like a wind tunnel, thanks to "air-conditioning." Turn it off—and you roll and toss in the sweltering night air of Lagos. Turn it on—and the *rat-tat-tat* shakes you to a neurotic jelly. There are, also, animals. . . .

I hear of a nice, new American-built establishment: the *Bristol* in the inner city. Iced water, DDT, and *real* air-conditioning. I transfer straightaway. It is, as advertised, cool and salubrious: a good, central base from which to explore the city.

Really, it is not much of a city, Lagos. It began as a slave market, one of the biggest on the Guinea Coast, a kind of West African counterpart to Zanzibar. The slave trade has long gone, but the town still cries out its origins. Lagos is a half-breed, an ugly amalgam of European slickness and African squalor. The redeeming features are lacking: Europe's efficiency, Africa's easy charm. Open drains run through the main streets; there are too many swaggering, loud-mouthed *nouveaux riches* in this town; and too many beggars. Lagos is half slum, half shiny new banks and embassies and commercial premises. Much is prestige building, mostly American-financed. But Lagos lacks, from the past, that faded imperial grandeur that constitutes the charm, say, of Calcutta or Bombay or Singapore. Lagos has simply no history to be proud of.

True, the city has one genuine architectural attraction: its "Brazilian" houses. Painted bright yellow, with elaborately plastered designs on wall and window, you find these houses scattered among the slums and skyscrapers of modern Lagos. How did they get there? At first, I had taken them for Portuguese (*lagos* is Portuguese for lake). Later, a friend sets me right. These charming "Brazilian" houses were built by ex-slaves, expelled by their Brazilian masters after a successful slave revolt in the early 19th century. Like the "creoles" of Sierra Leone and Liberia, these returned slaves brought with them something of European art and Christianity.

To which we must add a sad historical footnote. Back in Nigeria, none were more active in trading their fellow Yoruba and Ibo to America than the freed slaves themselves. Richard Wright, I seem to remember, said that one thought had always held him back from visiting West Africa: the thought that he would be meeting the descendants of those who had sold his ancestors into slavery.

When he finally did come to West Africa, he found Africans hard to make contact with. I remember puzzling over this at the time. West Africans, surely, are famous for their ebullience, their vitality, their lack of inhibition: all that is implied in the West African phrase "doing the High Life." (The High Life, strictly speaking, is West Africa's home-grown jazz—though not uninfluenced by American jazz. But the phrase is easily extended to cover a whole way of life.) The visitor to Nigeria, however, soon finds out for himself what Wright meant: the African *is* circumspect and suspicious, for all his gaiety. Out here, meeting Africans, I notice that a longish thawing-out period must be allowed for, before tongues are loosened and talk can flow. Is it just suspicion of the foreigner, of the white man? Apparently not: I'm told that relations between Africans themselves—particularly if there is a tribal difference involved—are no less suspicious, no less awkward. Is the High Life perhaps also an escape from the inhibitions of tribe and family?

Still, after some probationary sniffing around, personal relations are quickly established. I ask Mr. Ademola, a youngish barrister and very well-connected, what he thinks of Richard Wright, and American Negroes in general. Has he read James Baldwin's books? Do people feel solidarity with the Negro struggle in the States?

A discussion ensues. We are sitting, to escape from the sticky midday heat of Lagos, drinking beer in the billiard room of The Club, that one-time holy of holies of British imperialism. Here are to be found Lagos's leading doctors, lawyers, civil servants: prosperous and self-confident, Nigeria's new ruling class has adopted the manners of the old—they play billiards, they read the *Financial Times*, they even

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claim the same "home leave" that was the special privilege of British colonial civil servants. James Baldwin? "Yes, we've read about him in *Time* magazine." Richard Wright? "Yes, some of us met him when he was out here. Not easy to make contact with, of course: but then, those American Negroes, they have no *traditions,* have they? They don't feel they belong over there, do they? But they don't belong here either, we feel. We get on with white Americans, but with Negroes we just feel awkward. . . ."

And *négritude?* Mr. Lijadu, spruce young radio producer with the Lumumba beard, is most scornful. "We don't go in for that here, you know." (One can almost hear in what he says the echoes of extinct Colonel Blimps decrying "damned French nonsense. . . .") Much indignation is expressed—rightly I think—with a magazine called *Flamingo* that has a big circulation out here. "We don't want to see pictures of *Negro* sprinters, *Negro* painters, *Negro* dancers, *Negro* politicians, all the time. It's bloody insulting."

The same charge is pressed—though less strongly—against *Drum,* the famous Johannesburg magazine, formerly edited by Anthony Sampson and Tom Hopkinson. "You see, it implies a sort of *apartheid.* 'Separate development' means separate magazines—separate worlds for blacks and whites. But we want acceptance in the larger world, the white world—like the American Negro, in fact." *Flamingo,* I point out, is published in London. "Yes, exactly, and edited by a West Indian," is the reply. (In fact, *négritude* was invented by a West Indian—Aimé Césaire. And the first African nationalists to make an impression on the West Coast were West Indians or Americans—Du Bois, Marcus Garvey.) "But they *need négritude* as an ideology, you see, and we don't. We're a nation—or many nations—we have languages, traditions, territories of our own. I suppose that sounds a bit arrogant or superior. But they are always in search of their roots, and we're doing our best to pull them up. Anyway, what makes a West Indian, or a Negro American, different from a Frenchman or an Englishman, or an American? Nothing but his black skin! Ergo: *négritude.*"

This seems to be the general view. As I record it, of course, it sounds arrogant and insensitive. The African cannot see the New World Negro as his brother; yet neither can he accept him as a full-blooded American. But then, one of the shocks, I suppose, of coming to Africa for the first time, is finding that "black," or even "African" nationalism doesn't really exist. Solidarity with South Africa's non-whites, or with American Negroes, is perfunctory. The accounts we read in our newspapers, based on African politicians' speeches, are extremely misleading. The talk in The Club in Lagos is not of Chief Lutuli and Martin Luther King. Negro solidarity has only, as it were, a diplomatic existence; it isn't *felt.* (Which isn't to deny that powerful trouble is brewing in the U.N. and elsewhere for South Africa, and for America and Britain, on racial issues.) The real nationalism is Nigerian or Ghanaian—nothing gives the Nigerian a stronger sense of nationhood than the resentment he feels over Nkrumah's lunatic behavior—and, no doubt, vice versa. The irony, of course, is that Nigeria and Ghana are little more than lines drawn on maps, the product of some rough horse-dealing in the European chancelleries seventy years ago. Still, that is the mold in which nationalism has grown; and it has infinitely greater reality than pan-Africanism. As in all the new nations, the intellectuals and politicians in Nigeria often seem arrogant and over-confident. But given the circumstances, I don't see how their view of the American Negro could be different. For the new nationalist, the American Negro is that infinitely pathetic figure: a man without a country.

CONCLUSIONS? Lagos, for all its superficial unattractiveness, is perhaps no bad introduction to the new Africa. Certainly, the foreign visitor runs no risk of being seduced by the exotic. Lagos gives, too, something of a glimpse into the African future. The *nouveau-riche* atmosphere, the all-pervading corruption, the squalor and the arrogance, are not pleasant: but who are we to carp? The other side of the coin is the vitality, the enthusiasm, the sense of possibility that are also there. We too often speak as if these qualities were mutually exclusive, which is why writers on Africa can so easily be categorized into pessimists and optimists. But why should they be mutually exclusive—vitality *and* corruption, appalling squalor *and* unlimited possibilities? Isn't that just the picture European travelers had of the United States, say, in the late 19th century? Pessimists, of course, like to make the comparison with Latin America after the Liberation. In political terms, they are probably going to be right. Nigeria was launched in 1960 with high hopes, yet already the Action Group, the progressive West Nigerian party of Chief Awolowo, has been suppressed and its leaders jailed. Here in Lagos, the press is timid; there is no real public opinion; politics is run on traditional Tammany Hall lines.

All this looks pretty black. But there is one flaw in the comparison between Africa and Latin America. Africa won't stagnate, I think, chiefly because it won't be allowed to. It's not only the money—American, British, West German—flowing into the country, though that's important. It's the *attention* Africa is receiving, together with the shortening of communications, the new sense of involvement—in the U.N., in the Commonwealth, in pan-African conferences. You can fly from London to Lagos in one afternoon; you can buy the London daily papers the same day; you see the same television serials and documentaries in Nigeria as you would see in London

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or New York. It's a "backward" country, certainly; but you don't get the sense of being in a cultural backwater—a sense which the foreign visitor gets so strongly in India. Whether Africa will go on receiving all this attention depends, more than the Nigerians realize, on the international situation. Really, if they knew their own interests, African politicians would be down on their knees, thanking God for the uncovenanted blessings of the white man's cold war. . . .

Ibadan, June 22.

Ibadan is the capital of the Western Region, once the stronghold of the Action Group, and the main center of Yoruba culture. The Yoruba, you are told, are one of the few town-dwelling peoples of Africa—and have been so at least since the Portuguese first explored the Guinea Coast in the 16th century. After Johannesburg and Cairo, you are also told, Ibadan is the largest city in Africa. It has probably the best university in black Africa; is one of the great markets of West Africa; and enjoys, in the Mbari Club, one of the few vital cultural institutions south of the Sahara.

Thus prepared, you are in for a disappointment. Except for its size, Ibadan seems to have none of the attributes of a city. It spreads, incoherently and un-Romanly, over seven hills. The University has a fine modernistic campus; but that lies some way outside the city. Still, Ibadan is much more authentically *African* than Lagos. Its principle of organization is, at first, baffling: where is the main street, the city hall, the shopping center? Gradually, you realize that European analogies are not much help. Ibadan is like one of those less differentiated biological organisms that evolve by addition, not by specialization. Basically, Ibadan is just the African cell unit —the complex extended family—multiplied some ten thousand times. By European standards, the result is not impressive. But compared with the even less differentiated societies of Central and Eastern Africa—which have nothing to compare with the Ife or Benin bronzes of Yorubaland—this town-based culture *is* a remarkable achievement. According to Herskovits—basic scripture for eggheads abroad in Africa—only in the West did climatic and soil conditions permit that surplus-over-subsistence which makes possible sculpture, metal work, a money economy, a sophisticated religious ritual. It's only when the European visitor has seen the African locations of Johannesburg or Salisbury, or the impoverished African cultures of the East Coast, that the richness and vitality of a Yoruba city like Ibadan strike him.

The Ife and Benin bronzes, and the Yoruba sculptures, can be seen in the excellent little museum in Lagos. They are more impressive than one had realized, without doubt the best art to have come out of Africa. But the art of the carver and sculptor is dying: what is offered the tourist in Lagos shops is mostly *kitsch*. Artistic vitality, in Nigeria anyway, has now gone into literature. And Nigeria has produced—it's one reason I wanted to come here—a group of first-rate talents within the past five years. The forerunner was Amos Tutuola, whose genuine artistic "primitivism" (the word gives offense to Africans, but it is strictly accurate) is now rather at a discount. One can see why. This is how Tutuola's *The Palm Wine Drinkard* opens:

> I was a palm wine drinkard since I was a boy of ten years of age. I had no other work than to drink palm wine in my life. In those days, we did not know other money, except *cowries,* so that everything was very cheap, and my father was the richest man in our town. . . .

One has to remember that when Tutuola's book first appeared, it was in a literary landscape dominated (in England, at least) by Dylan Thomas and his disciples. The poetry of Tutuola's chapter-headings was irresistible:

> A Full-bodied Gentleman Reduced to dead
>
> The Lady was not to be Blamed for following the Skull as a Complete Gentleman
>
> On our way to the Unreturnable—Heaven's Town
>
> We and The Wise King in the Wrong Town with the Prince Killer
>
> An Egg fed the whole world
>
> But who would carry the sacrifice to the Heaven for Heaven?

Tutuola now lives in Ibadan, where he works as stores clerk for the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. To meet, he is more than a little disconcerting. Frances, the program director, sends a boy down to collect Tutuola from the nether regions of the establishment. He emerges, a blinking, stooped, extraordinarily gentle man, in his middle forties. After a few mumbled words of introduction, conversation lapses. How had he started writing? What English writers had he read? Tutuola continues to smile, in his vague, gracious way. Am I asking the wrong questions? Have I offended him? Is he bored?

Wole Soyinka, the most remarkable of the younger poets Nigeria has produced, is with us in the room, and saves the situation. Wole's flamboyant manner couldn't contrast more starkly with Tutuola's quiet, sphinx-like, deferential air. Yet they get on famously: chatting in Yoruba, the otherwise bumptious and irrepressible Wole suddenly defers to the older man. Wole's plays, like Tutuola's works, are based on traditional Yoruba folklore. You sense, once again, the richness and vitality of this oral tradition (the Yoruba, like the other Bantu and Negro peoples of Africa, never invented an alphabet).

In this newly liberated continent, where all words like "native," *"indigène,"* and "primitive" are taboo,

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Amos Tutuola must represent an embarrassment. Wole himself is certainly no primitive. Witness his best-known poem, "Telephone Conversation," which deals with the difficulties of an African room-hunting in London:

The price seemed reasonable, location
Indifferent. The landlady swore she lived
Off premises. Nothing remained
But self-confession. "Madam," I warned,
"I hate a wasted journey—I am African."
Silence. Silenced transmission of
Pressurized good-breeding. Voice, when it came,
Lipstick-coated, long gold-rolled
Cigarette-holder pipped. Caught I was, foully.
"How dark?" . . . I had not misheard . . . "Are you light
Or very dark?" . . . .

Wole's conclusion, in art as in life, is characteristically naughty-clever:

"—Facially, I am brunette, but madam, you should see
The rest of me. Palm of my hand, soles of my feet
Are a peroxide blonde. Friction, caused—
Foolishly, madam—by sitting down, has turned
My bottom raven black—One moment madam!" —sensing
Her receiver rearing on the thunderclap
About my ears—"Madam," I pleaded, "wouldn't you rather
See for yourself?"

In pointing to the "sophistication" of this, one is not necessarily proclaiming a new birth for English poetry in the tropics—though one is exposed, as a visiting European, to a good deal of talk about the cultural exhaustion of England (and presumably America), and the "vital future" awaiting the English language in underdeveloped countries. . . . To be fair, you wouldn't hear this from Wole or his friends. (Wole on *négritude:* "Tigers don't go on about their tigritude, why should we go on about *négritude*?") But it's something you are all too likely to hear from their less intelligent hangers-on, for whom *négritude* is something of a psychological necessity (you'll also hear it from their English admirers out here). Still, this sudden uprush of talent is astonishing. There are half a dozen writers who approach Wole's sophistication—Christopher Okigbo, John Pepper Clark, Gabriel Okara, Chinua Achebe. Why should a school of writers like this have emerged here, and not elsewhere in Africa—or, for that matter, India? I put this question to Ulli Beier, the man who behind the scenes has encouraged and promoted this group. Beier, I suppose, is one of Africa's leading "characters" at the moment: German-Jewish by birth, Yoruba by faith and adoption, he strikes one as a worthy successor to the many "mad" Germans (and Englishmen and Americans) who have made Africa their hobby-horse—Mungo Park, Amin Pasha, Stanley, Heinrich Barth, Livingstone, Albert Schweitzer. At forty-two, Beier is powerfully built, very *farouche* in appearance with his tousled, graying hair, his enormous sandaled feet, his rather eccentric amalgam of Yoruba and European clothing. He has lived here since 1950, working as extramural lecturer at Ibadan University and writing books on Yoruba poetry and Nigerian art. Accepted in Yoruba society as no European has been accepted before, he has been granted the title of Chief, and his wife is a priestess in a traditional Yoruba shrine.

I had read Beier's books before meeting him, and had not expected to like him. In his book on Nigerian art, done for Independence celebrations, there was for my taste too much boosting of the virtues of Yoruba traditionalism, and too much running down of European sanitation, technology, and "materialism." In short, I'd taken him for the *Afrika-Schwärmer* par excellence, and I was sure he'd tell me that the hope of civilization lay in Africa alone; that Yoruba paganism was in all respects superior to imported Methodism, Catholicism, and Anglicanism; and that no non-initiate should even attempt to understand the African soul.

I was completely wrong. About Nigeria's political future, Beier is remarkably pessimistic: the drift toward one-party control will continue, he thinks, and the independence of universities, radio stations, newspapers—seemingly so well secured in 1960, when Independence came—will probably be jeopardized still further. Had he expected it to go so fast? Well, no, he hadn't. In 1960, everybody was very optimistic, not least the British Conservatives, who saw Nigeria as a "reliable," democratic, anti-Communist counterweight to Ghana on the West Coast of Africa. I object that the visitor is struck, nevertheless, by the vitality and optimism of the young writers and intellectuals. But even there, Beier has grown more skeptical. The government likes the prestige they bring; but it doesn't like their angry young man's irreverence toward authority. The good jobs in the universities and the radio stations, the foreign travel and the conference-trotting—all really depend on the good will of the government. Beier confirms my impression that Wole and his friends are riding high at the moment. But it's clear he thinks they're riding for a fall. . . .

What is his explanation, then, for Nigeria's minor literary renaissance? He points out that West Africa, in general, is more "advanced" than East or South Africa. There's been much longer contact between Africans and Europeans here, and the Mission schools —for all Beier's dislike of the "anti-Africanism" of the missionaries—*did* provide good education in English. Again, there's never been a color bar in West Africa, because there's never been any question of European settlement. Then, Lord Lugard's theory of "indirect rule"—whatever one thinks of its political implications—certainly did help to conserve native traditions and authorities. Even the slave

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trade was less disruptive than is sometimes thought. Inhuman though it was, by bringing wealth into the country and eliminating surplus population, it may actually have been a *conservative* factor in West African life. The confrontation with the white world could be traumatic—as in Achebe's novel, *Things Fall Apart*—but it was even more so elsewhere in Africa; and when it gave rise to nationalistic protest, it was at least a nationalism free of racialism. All in all, compared with Kenya or Rhodesia, or South Africa, West African colonialism was a pretty mild yoke to bear.

The other factor, Beier agrees, is the strength of the underlying tradition. It's this that inspires and sustains Tutuola and Wole and the rest; and it gives them a practical self-confidence in regard to the English-speaking world that's sadly lacking in India or in other parts of Africa. The overpowering sense of isolation, of being provincial, that afflicts most writers in India, is lacking in Wole and his friends. Also, English in Nigeria is *vital* in a way that would be impossible to imagine in India. In Tutuola's case, I should guess, the vitality has something to do with that peculiarly West African phenomenon: pidgin English. Pidgin English is wildly incorrect, but it has a distinct character and charm of its own. The waiter in the Lagos restaurant, when he wants to ask you if you've had enough, asks: *"You done eat?"* The little night-bars of Lagos that beckon with gaily decorated signs, express the spirit of a whole subculture: "If music be food," they say, "play on." Beier tells me of the little "books of wisdom" on sale at Onitsha market, and quotes, from one book of advice to a young couple, the magnificent aphorism: "Marriage is a novel in which the hero dies in the first chapter." There must be a connection between the vitality of demotic English here, and the kind of literature that Tutuola, Soyinka, and Achebe have been able to produce.

Kano, June 26.

"Northern intellectuals? You must be joking! There just aren't any: no writers; no night-bars; no High Life; no politics either, for that matter. The Emirs have got the people under their thumb. You'll be taking a Time Machine back into the Middle Ages, you know, when you fly to Kano. . . ."

Southerners—Yoruba and Ibo alike—don't care much for the Northerners, as you gather. And the feeling is reciprocated up here, if anything more strongly. Kano is the Timbuktu of Nigeria—and very like its more famous cousin a few hundred miles across the savanna. It's a trading city, the biggest market in Africa; mud-walled, very ancient, it is today still the main city of Northern Nigeria. Outside the walled city, there's a modern town, with bright new commercial buildings and a satellite tracking station of which Kano is inordinately proud. Kano is also a main stopping point for international jets to Johannesburg and the South. "A city," as the guidebook has it, "of contrasts."

Politically and socially, Northern Nigeria is "backward." But the Northern region, with its twenty-odd million (out of thirty-five million) is also politically dominant. In effect, this perpetuates the formula the British found so convenient in governing Nigeria in the past. When Frederick Lugard, with a handful of soldiers, subdued the Northern Emirates in the years after 1900, his chief motive had been to get there before the French. Otherwise, there was precious little strategic or economic value in his conquests. Once the country was occupied, there arose the question of administration: the basic problem, as in all parts of Africa where mineral resources were lacking, was to make colonies financially self-supporting. Lugard found the solution in his famous theory of "indirect rule." Actually, the British had long practiced something like "indirect rule" in India: well over half the subcontinent was ruled by "native princes," with a British Resident in attendance. The system was transplanted to Nigeria, where the Obas of the South, and the Moslem Emirs of the North, were treated as the "natural rulers" of the peoples.

The result, now the British are gone, is oddly paradoxical. Talking to Africans, you meet two contradictory lines of attack on British imperialism. Thus, the British are accused of not having developed their colonies; of having retarded their economic development in the interest of the metropolis; of having frozen political advance by giving new powers and prestige to obsolete social and political systems. But the British are *equally* accused of having brought about the destruction of native social customs and hierarchies, of having destroyed old values without creating new ones. Some Africans, it's true, will admit that "indirect rule" had its points. But they are always open to attacks from pan-Africanists, who argue that Dr. Verwoerd's Bantustan policy is nothing but another version of "indirect rule"—an attempt to reinstate tribal authority over the heads of educated African nationalists. Seen in this light, "indirect rule" is retrospectively interpreted as a policy designed by Lugard and his friends to keep Africa backward. The tendency of the local British (of whom there are a good many still in local administration, and more in business than there ever were) is to claim all the credit for British colonial policy in equally undiscriminating fashion. Thus, the survival of local customs and religion is put down to the wisdom of the Colonial Office in not interfering. In fact, of course, the motive was often *contempt*. Yet the Britisher quite sincerely sees his policy of *laissez-faire* as having been inspired by enlightened concern for traditional values. So, too, every mark of progress—a new railway here, a new hospital there—is chalked up as a British contribution to the modernization of Nigeria, though such railway-building and road-making activity as there was represented the

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minimum necessary for efficient administration (and, sometimes, economic exploitation), not the maximum needed for development of the country's resources.

The truth, I think, is much less "ideological" than either side makes it seem in retrospect. The real reason for "indirect rule" was the discovery after 1900—after the "scramble for Africa" of the 80's and 90's—that most colonies did not pay (it was *thirty* years before even Rhodes's famous Chartered Company returned a dividend). This had, of course, been foreseen by Bismarck and by many British statesmen of the 60's and 70's. Once saddled with colonies, the problem for the imperial powers was to devise a way of making them, at the least, self-supporting. For most of the period 1890–1940, colonies were "neglected" simply because the metropolitan countries, themselves economically stagnant, could think of no good use for them—just assumed, until it was too late, that Africans could be made into, and wanted to become, good Frenchmen. Both "indirect rule" and "Independence" were adopted, not on any ideological basis, but because they were the cheapest, quickest, and most practical expedient.

The British like to think in retrospect that they "prepared" their subject peoples for independence. In fact, the British gave this problem extremely little thought until the past ten or fifteen years—until, in effect, their hand had already been forced by the nationalist intellectuals. Personally, I believe that colonialism was historically beneficial (Abyssinia and Liberia are eloquent witnesses of what happened to countries that sidestepped the process). But both the claims made for, and the charges made against, colonialism seem unrealistic. As far as British colonialism went, it was neither especially glorious, nor especially squalid: it was a characteristically British middle.

IT ISN'T until one has seen Kano that one sees how wrong is the plain man's idea of African history. Recent historians, of course, have demolished the notion that Africa had no history before the arrival of the Europeans. Indeed, the pendulum seems to have swung to the other extreme. Both Africans themselves and well-meaning European "friends of Africa" have put into currency rather large claims about the quality of the civilization of pre-colonial Africa (Aesop and St. Augustine are claimed as expressions of the "African personality": "the first spoon," I read in one Nigerian paper, "was stirred in Khartoum").

I suspect these claims, personally, as I suspect *Afrika-Schwärmerei* in general. The British-educated intellectuals of Lagos and Ibadan admit frankly that Yoruba and kindred languages lack the potentiality to oust English as means of scientific or literary communication. Ulli Beier's "mud sculpture" is, to me, a fascinating folk art. But when he expatiates on the superiority of this art on the grounds that, being ephemeral, it points to the higher value the Yoruba places on the *act* of creation (as against the dead museum art of Europe), I don't follow him. The sculpture of West Africa is splendid, I agree. But it's not "unfriendly to Africa," surely, to point out that Africa *didn't* discover the wheel, *didn't* invent a script, *didn't* evolve a higher religion.

Still, in one respect the new historians are clearly right, and the plain man wrong. I admit, for instance, that I used to think of Africa as a kind of large biscuit nibbled at the edges (until, during the scramble for Africa, the nibbling process at last reached the center of the biscuit). I now see that this was a hopelessly European view of the matter. The real axes of Africa ran East-West, across the savannas of what is now Mali and Northern Nigeria to the Southern Sudan; and North-South, from the highlands of Ethiopia, across Kenya and Tanganyika, to the *veld* of South Africa. This double spine of Africa, unlike the rain forests of the Coast, is dry, relatively cool, easily traversable. Whatever it was that held Africa back, it clearly *wasn't* the impenetrability that so impressed the European mind. Kano was one of the great trading centers of Africa long before the Portuguese reached the coast in the 15th century. It had links, laterally, with the ancient empires of Ghana and Mali in the West, and with the Nubian-Egyptian world of the Sudan in the East. And it had intimate links, from the beginning, with the Negro forest peoples of the Guinea Coast. It traded across the Sahara with Morocco and Libya —and, through them, with Europe. It exported gold and slaves and ivory and imported metal and spices —and the culture of Islam. The image of Africa as a nibbled biscuit couldn't be more mistaken.

Though by now he ought to know better, the European visitor still shares the surprise of Captain Hugh Clapperton (who was probably the first European to see Kano) at the extent of these links with the larger world. In 1824 Clapperton wrote:

> I bought, for three Spanish dollars, an English green cotton umbrella, an article I little expected to meet with, yet by no means uncommon. My Moorish servants, in their figurative language, were wont to give it the name of "the cloud." I found, on enquiry, that these umbrellas are brought from the shores of the Mediterranean. . . .

What strikes the visitor in Kano's market is this paradox of African history: the centuries of contact with Islamic and Mediterranean culture—but also the relative lack of impact, the inertia of the continent. A brief inspection of the market Clapperton described one hundred fifty years ago confirms that little has changed. There are no slaves, of course, and there are more Manchester- (or more likely, Essen- or Calcutta- or Osaka-) made goods than ever. Indeed, it's disillusioning to thread one's way

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among the stalls and, turning over brightly colored pots and pans, to find "made in Hong Kong" and "made in Japan" on so many. These hideous red-and-yellow objects—obviously produced especially for the African market—are rapidly displacing the beautiful carved calabashes of tradition. Again, a small industry has grown up in one corner of the market, devoted to the beating of torn automobile bodies into round bowls. The products of a higher technology, not understood, are absorbed in patient, laborious African fashion into the traditional culture. And this has been happening, evidently, for generations. There's a stall at Kano Market where you can buy reproductions of Austrian silver dollars first minted by Maria Theresa in the 1750's.

To one's Yoruba and Ibo friends, it is all very primitive and regrettable: "The North," they say, "has a long way to catch up." But to me, and I think to most Europeans who've seen it, Kano *is* Africa. I don't (I hope) mean this in a romantic sense: there are enough *Afrika-Schwärmer* as it is. It's simply that here, far more than in Lagos or Accra or Brazzaville, you can feel this paradox of African history. To be sure, the historians who denied Africa a past of its own *were* wrong. But they were never as wrong as all that. After all, Kano and Timbuktu, the cities of the savanna, have been in contact with Mediterranean and Egyptian and Middle Eastern culture for two or three thousand years. True, they were always on the fringe of the civilized world—but so, for that matter, were England or Russia or Scandinavia. Africa took what the larger world had to offer—the *cowries* or shells she used for currency, for example, came from the Indian Ocean. She was never the "dark continent," in the sense of being wholly isolated, as Europeans once assumed. But she *did* remain on the fringe, giving rise to a medley of provincial cultures, imitating always, originating seldom.

How SHOULD one sum Africa up? Is she too diverse, too complex, too rapidly changing for any summary? No doubt she is. And Nigeria, you may say, is not Africa—though, diverse and divided as she is, Nigeria is no bad image of Africa today. On the evidence of what I've seen, I'd go for two rather general and possibly sobering conclusions. One is that the fact that West Africa is relatively unencumbered with an ancient culture may enable her to make her adjustment to the modern world more easily than many Asian countries. But there is also a debit side. Africa has politics and cultures and religions of her own, but there is no African politics or culture or religion as such. At times, her arts achieve a striking originality, and obviously there is much that will be, and ought to be, preserved in her various cultures. But a coherent "African personality" does not exist and never has, except in the minds of Kwame Nkrumah and his European admirers. Africa has always been provincial in relation to the larger cultures of Christianity, Islam, and Hindustan. This was true in the age of the great Egyptian dynasties (from which African notions of Divine Kingship may derive), and it is true today in relation to the "higher" technological and political cultures of America, Europe, India, and Japan—and the Communist bloc.

To say this, of course, is "offensive to African sentiment." But then, *whatever* one says is likely to offend: Africans demand the right to be candid to us, but they don't care for candor at their own expense. Yet candor *is* important just now, not so much because of what the Africans say, as because of what their European admirers say. Africa isn't the new center of world politics. Forty-million-strong Nigeria is the only black African state, apart from South Africa and the Congo, which has a chance of emerging as the equal of, say, Egypt, Argentina, or Indonesia. (I assume, surely rightly, that no major interstate fusion will take place.) Economically, almost all African states—though this might not apply to a black South Africa—are crippled by dependence on certain agricultural exports, whose value is constantly changing, and where the developed countries will for long hold the whip hand. Politically, the effects of corruption, of faltering morale, of frustrated idealism, will lead to widespread disillusion, both at home and abroad, with the "African experiment." At that point, I believe, Ghana and the other new states of Africa will be spoken of in the cynical terms once reserved for Latin American banana republics.

From being the most underrated continent, in other words, Africa has perhaps become the most overrated. It would be a pity, however, if the reaction came too soon or too violently. Africa may not always deserve it, but she does need our good will, our Peace Corps, our technical aid. Above all, I feel, she needs our *attention*. What we in the West say matters far more than we think; and to make allowances, to find excuses for every petty despotism committed by a black man, does no one except the despots any good. (Several African friends were extremely violent about this in private.)

Colonialism is now a dead issue, except in Southern Africa. The problem for the newly independent states is to accept the fact—and it can be a painful awakening—that decolonialization in itself means rather little. They have to realize that they are still backward, still provincial, still on the fringe of a larger and more powerful culture—and that there isn't much they can do about it. Will the awakening to these facts lead to disillusionment and extremist politics, as it has done in Ghana? Naturally, one hopes not, but no one really knows.

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EMIL L. FACKENHEIM

KANT AND JUDAISM

PHILOSOPHY HAS always questioned revelation in general and revealed morality in particular. But no philosopher prior to Kant found it necessary to inquire whether all revealed morality might be less than truly moral simply by virtue of being revealed: that is to say, whether all revealed morality might be a contradiction in terms.

The most radical objection to revealed morality made by pre-Kantian philosophy was against the claim of some theologians that revelation is the sole source of our knowledge of moral law. Philosophy was forced to reject this claim. For to be obligated to any law, a man must be able to know that law; and yet, on the admission of the theologians themselves, revealed moral law is accessible only to those who possess the revealed Scriptures. This objection, however, by no means amounts to a rejection of revealed morality. In the eyes of philosophy, a law to qualify as moral must, in addition to being knowable, also be universally obligatory. Therefore, the pre-Kantian objection to revealed morality merely requires religion to provide for an access to revealed law —or rather, to the moral part of it— that is universally human and independent of revelation. If religion can do this, pre-Kantian philosophy is prepared to accept revealed law as moral.

Can this requirement be met by Judaism? One's first resort would be the seven commandments imposed upon the children of Noah; unlike the revelation at Mount Sinai, which is for the children of Israel alone, the Noachidic revelation is given to all men. But this will satisfy the philosopher only if he can exact a further concession. The Noachidic "revelation"—if one chooses to retain this term—must be regarded as accessible without a Scripture: for the Noachides have no Scripture. It must be, that is, the apprehension of a universal human capacity—in short, just what the philosopher has called reason all along.

Traditional Judaism may have misgivings about this concession. Nevertheless, it will make it—and not only because philosophy requires it to. The Talmud itself (Yoma 67 b) distinguishes between *moral* revealed laws which, "had they not been written by God would have had to be written by men," and *non*-moral revealed laws, "to which Satan and the Gentiles object." But if, without divine action, men would have *had* to write moral law, then they must be *able* to write it. And if the Gentiles—who object to non-moral revealed law— do *not* object to moral revealed law, then men, by virtue of their reason, must in fact have written at least some of it.

Thus, however much the revealed morality of Judaism and the rational morality of pre-Kantian philosophy may quarrel about the *content* of moral law, they have no necessary quarrel concerning its *foundations*. The philosopher has no moral reason for objecting in principle to a morality resting on revelation. And the Jewish theologian has no religious reason for objecting in principle to a morality resting on reason. Moreover, this mutual tolerance concerning the foundations of morality also produces opportunities for settling conflicts concerning its content. One can point to the long line of Jewish rationalists who believed that since the same God was the creator of human reason and the giver of the Sinaitic revelation, the discoveries of the one and the teachings of the other could be in no genuine conflict.

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II

THIS STATE of peaceful coexistence between reason and revelation was upset by a revolutionary thesis that Kant first developed in his *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), and to which he kept returning in his later work, as if unable to leave it alone. The thesis is stated in the *Fundamental Principles* as follows:

> [If the will is moral] it is not merely subject to law, but subject in such a way that it must also be regarded as imposing the law on itself, and subject to it for that reason only. . . . All past efforts to identify the principle of morality have failed without exception. For while it was seen that man is bound by his duty to laws, it was not seen that he is subject only to his own, albeit at the same time universal legislation, and obligated to act only according to his own, albeit . . . universally legislating will. So long as one thought of man as merely subject to a law, whatever its content, without this law originating in his own will, one had to think of him as impelled to action by something other than himself. The law had to carry with it some interest which induced or impelled him to action. But in this way all labor to discover the supreme ground of duty was lost beyond recovery. For one could thus never arrive at duty, but merely at the necessity of action for some interest.

And as Kant concludes, an externally compelling or cajoling law must necessarily be "heteronomous," or impure, so far as moral motivation is concerned. To be pure, a moral law must be autonomous, or self-imposed.

This thesis goes well beyond the idea that a law, to be morally obligatory, must be knowable to all men. Kant would have considered that this condition was met by those ancient thinkers who identified the moral law with the law of the universe, or for that matter, by their present-day heirs who identify moral law with the laws of mental health. The essence of the Kantian thesis is that neither of these laws, however universal, can by itself *obligate* a man to obedience; they can do no more than promise happiness or mental health as the reward of obedience, and threaten unhappiness or neurosis as the punishment for defiance. They are not obligatory because they are not imposed on the individual by himself. Thus, while they may be prudent, wise, or beneficial, they cannot be moral.

As Kant sees it, then, many laws can induce or force us to obey, but no law in heaven or on earth can obligate us to obey unless we *accept ourselves* as obligated to obey. And unless we can accept ourselves as obligated, we cannot *be* obligated. Once clearly understood, Kant's thesis is so powerful as to be very nearly irresistible. As such, it poses an unprecedented challenge to every revealed morality—regardless of content—and simply by virtue of its being revealed. The challenge can be stated as follows: If in order to be moral a law must be self-imposed, and not imposed from without, then how can a law given or imposed by God have genuine moral qualities? Before Kant, moral philosophy, as we have seen, could accept revealed morality conditionally. Kant's moral philosophy threatens it radically, for revelation is either a gift to man from without—the gift of a Being *other* than man—or else it is not revelation at all.

III

ACCORDING TO one widely held interpretation of Kant's thesis, the will, in imposing moral law on itself, *creates* that law. Moral law is the collective creation of the human spirit, and is moral only because it is so created. In rising to the life of morality, man actively transforms his own being by means of ideals which are themselves a human creation. All true morality is creative simply by virtue of being truly moral. And all submissiveness, no matter to whom or what, is less than truly moral simply because it is submissive.

Philosophers who accept this version of the Kantian thesis will reject in principle all revealed morality. They will look upon such a morality as at worst a passive acquiescence in the whims of an alien deity, and at best as a creative morality which fails to recognize itself for what it is—mistaking for a received gift what is in truth its own creation. And because of this mistake, it still falls short of pure morality.

But it is important to realize that this version of the Kantian thesis is at variance with the position taken by Kant himself.* For Kant emphatically denies that the human spirit creates moral law. In order to impose moral law on himself, man need not, in Kant's view, be either its individual or its collective creator. He need be capable only of *appropriating* a law, which in fact he has *not* created, *as though* he had created it.

Unlike the "creative morality" philosophies, Kant's own doctrine therefore does not rule out revealed morality from the start. For if the moral will need not create but only appropriate moral

* The "creative morality" interpretation of Kant by thinkers from Fichte to Hermann Cohen has also affected quite un-Kantian philosophies, such as those of Nietzsche and Dewey, as well as much popular moral and psychological thinking. Since I intend to document elsewhere the view that this interpretation is not Kantian, I can here only refer the reader to G. Krueger, *Philosophie und Moral in der Kantischen Kritik.*

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law, why might it not appropriate a law given by God? This possibility, however, seems to disappear when we inquire more deeply into the question; while not ruling out revealed morality from the start, Kant's doctrine very much threatens it in the end. Let us see how.

The Kantian assertion that the moral will must act *as though* it were the creator of moral law confronts the believer in a revealed morality with a grave dilemma. If, on the one hand, he concedes that the will can and must impose the God-given law upon itself, he is forced to say that its God-givenness is irrelevant. If, on the other hand, he insists that the God-givenness of the law does not and cannot at any point become irrelevant, he must deny that the will can impose that law on itself, and he must acknowledge that it can only submit to the revealed law for such non-moral reasons as trust in divine promises and fear of divine threats.*

Kant himself clearly perceives this dilemma, but it does not trouble him. The religious man, he says, must choose between what he terms "theological morality" and "moral theology," and to choose moral theology is to gain everything and to lose nothing.

The religious man who opts for the other possibility and chooses "theological morality," accepts laws as moral because they are the will of God. Thus he not only submits to an alien law, but he does so insofar as it is alien, and indeed, *because* it is alien. Consequently, he cannot impose that law upon himself, and he can only obey it—if obey it he does—because of the external sanctions attached to it. "Theological morality" is, and can only be, "heteronomous" morality.

The religious man, according to Kant, can rise above this and achieve moral autonomy only if he chooses "moral theology." Instead of accepting laws as moral because they are the will of God, moral theology ascribes laws to God because they are intrinsically moral, and known to be so quite apart from the will of God. Because the human will is capable of recognizing their intrinsic morality, it can impose these laws upon itself, thus achieving moral autonomy.

* Samuel Hirsch, a remarkable 19th-century Jewish thinker, neatly illustrates this dilemma. Hirsch subscribed to Kantian morality. Yet he also believed quite literally in revelation. Aware of the possibility of conflict, he sought to resolve it by interpreting revelation (following Lessing) as divine education toward moral autonomy. Hirsch's ingenuity in developing this doctrine does not save it from ultimate failure. Revelation becomes merely divine guidance, the sole purpose of which is to emancipate man from the need for guidance, and hence from revelation itself.

However, Kant's moral theology is purchased at a high price. For in imposing moral laws on itself, the will need not and indeed cannot, pay heed to their God-givenness. The act which appropriates the God-given moral law reduces its God-givenness to irrelevance. Therefore, one might well ask why Kant's religious man who achieves moral autonomy should still be a religious man—why he should end up with "moral theology" rather than with morality pure and simple. What necessity is there for ascribing the moral law to divine authorship, and what is the function of this ascription? This is a question of some complexity. But, in Kant's view, so long as we think within a purely moral context—asking ourselves what our duty is and why we should do it—the question does not arise at all. In that context, the question of the author of the moral law may be, or possibly even must be, left open. Kant writes: "The veiled goddess before whom we bend our knees is the moral law within us. . . . To be sure, we hear her voice and clearly understand her commandments, but are, in hearing them, in doubt as to who is speaking: whether man, in the self-sufficient power of his own reason, or Another, whose nature is unknown, and who speaks to man through the medium of his reason. Perhaps we would do better to refrain even from inquiring. For such a question is merely speculative, and our duty remains the same, whatever the source from which it issues."

IV

In confronting the revealed morality of Judaism with the challenge of Kant's thesis, one makes two extraordinary discoveries. The first is that this morality is neither autonomous nor heteronomous—to take both terms in their Kantian sense. The other is that Jewish religious thought has only rarely noticed this crucial fact, and then only dimly, in the nearly two hundred years of its debate with the Kantian position.

This failure is no doubt due to the apologetic tendencies which have marred all the standard Jewish responses to Kant. According to a central doctrine of the Jewish tradition, the commandments are not truly performed until they are performed for their own sake. Orthodox thinkers would hardly be expected to overlook this doctrine; yet in confronting Kant, this is precisely what they seem to have done. In their concern to rescue God as the divine law-giver from irrelevance, they have been prone to argue that the commandments would necessarily have remained unperformed were it not for the divine sanctions behind them. Instead of insisting that the revealed morality of

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Judaism is not heteronomous, they have tended to insist that all morality must be so—thereby not only positing a false doctrine, but also pleading guilty, on behalf of Judaism, to a mistaken charge.

The Liberal responses to Kant have suffered even more gravely from apologetic bias. If Orthodox thinkers have argued that the morality of Judaism is revealed but heteronomous, Liberal thinkers have often acted as though they regarded it as autonomous but not revealed. Their purpose has been to make the prophets and rabbis speak with a new voice; and the voice was the voice of the Kantian self-legislating reason.

This transformation has been attempted in two different ways—both doomed to failure. Some Liberal apologists have claimed that the prophets and rabbis taught—as it were, unconsciously—an autonomous morality, while continuing to hold a conscious faith in a revealing God. But such an interpretation still leaves their morality in need of liberal purification, and this eliminates the revealing God. The other way has been to regard the prophets and rabbis as not only teaching an autonomous morality but also as recognizing it as such. But this view involves a scandalous distortion of historical fact.

Thus, neither the Orthodox nor the Liberal apologists have perceived that the source and life of the revealed morality of Judaism lies precisely in the togetherness of a divine commanding Presence which never dissipates into irrelevance, with a human response which never loses its freedom to appropriate what it receives. The Jewish thinker cannot respond adequately to Kant's position until he becomes philosophically aware of this togetherness. He can then restate Kant's challenge as follows: how can man appropriate a God-given law or commandment, accepting and performing it as though it were his own, and yet remain during the very act of appropriation in an essential relation of obedience to its divine giver? How can man *morally* obey a law which is, and never ceases to be, *revealed?* According to Kant, this is clearly impossible. However, the Jewish philosopher is left in wonder: if he is to believe the testimony of both Jewish life and Jewish thought, what Kant thinks is impossible can yet be actual.

V

In order to answer this question which Kant forces upon Judaism, we must first grasp the phenomenon which gives rise to it. What is essential in this phenomenon will slip from notice if we try to attend separately to the divine commanding Presence in its otherness, and then to the human response in its power of free appropriation, and fail to comprehend the two in their essential unity. This unity is basic to Judaism and always has been. The idea that the divine commanding Presence can exist without the free human response, or vice versa, is found only in periods of spiritual decay; indeed, this idea *is* the decay. Except for such periods, there is no age in the spiritual history of Judaism so "primitive" that it manifests—in the style of "theological morality" —only a divine commanding Presence but "not yet" an act of human appropriation. Nor is there an age so "advanced" that it manifests—in the style of "moral theology"—only a free human appropriation but "no longer" a commanding God who can be present in all His otherness.

The otherness of the divine commanding Presence is most starkly disclosed in that pristine moment of Jewish history when the Divine, first reaching out to the human, calls it to its service. In that moment there are as yet no specified commandments, but only an unspecified divine commanding Presence. Abraham is commanded to go to another country without being told of the country, or of the purpose his migration is to serve. Prophets are called as messengers, before being given a specific message. Israel as a whole is challenged, knowing as yet no more of the challenge than that it is divine. In the pristine moment, the revelation of the divine commanding Presence does not communicate a finite content which the man who receives it might appraise and appropriate in the light of familiar standards. On the contrary, it calls into question all such content, and, indeed, all standards. Whatever may be true of subsequent history, there can be no mistaking this initial voice for an already familiar one, such as conscience or reason or "spiritual creativity."

Therefore, it might seem that the human response to this revelation, whatever else it may be, can have nothing in it of a free appropriation. Certainly, there can be no appropriation of specific commandments in the light of commensurate human standards; for there are as yet no such commandments. And there can be no appropriation of the unspecified divine commanding Presence itself, since it discloses itself as incommensurable with all things human. Thus, one might conclude that if there is any human freedom at all in the pristine moment, it can only be of the heteronomous kind, which is conditioned by fear or hope.

And yet it is precisely a freedom of this kind which could not survive the touch of the divine

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Presence. Such freedom might survive, perhaps, in moments of divine distance which, giving rise to only finite fear or hope, could leave room, as it were, for a freedom conditioned by them. But a fear or hope produced by the touch of divine Presence would necessarily be an absolute fear or hope; as such, it would inevitably overwhelm the freedom conditioned by them. If, then, man were capable of only heteronomous freedom in relation to God, a direct encounter with the divine Presence would reduce him, as long as that encounter lasted, to a creature without will, the tool of a blind fate.

Such a reduction is indeed the primordial experience of some religions. But it is not the primordial experience of Judaism. For here the divine manifests itself as *commanding,* which requires a residue of human freedom. And since the commanding divine is also a *Presence,* this freedom cannot be—as we have seen—merely conditional; it must be unconditional and absolute. Finally, the unconditional and absolute human freedom that is required by the divine command must be more even than that needed to accept or reject specific commandments for their own sake and on their own merits, since there are as yet no such commandments. This freedom, then, is nothing less than the freedom to accept or reject the divine commanding Presence as a whole, and for its own sake—that is, for no other reason than that it *is* that Presence. It is the freedom displayed by the prophet when he responds, "Here I am, send me," or by the people as a whole when they respond, "We shall do and hearken."

This pristine human freedom of choice is not, however, autonomous. For if there is any moment in which it stands in essential relation to, and indeed in need of, the commanding divine Other, it is precisely at the pristine moment of encounter with the divine Presence. Without that Other, man might have the autonomy to make all kinds of choices, but he would not have the power to make *this* choice—to accept or reject the divine commanding Presence. How could he accept or reject God, unless God had become present for him to accept or reject? The divine commanding Presence, then, may be said to *give* man this power to choose. It may even be said to *force* the choice upon him. For in being present, it *singles out.* And in singling out, it rules out every escape from the choice into some spurious third alternative.

It must be emphasized that this pristine choice remains a choice. The divine commanding Presence may force it on those who have been singled out. But it does not force the particular choice they make. At the same time, the choice itself is not heteronomous; the divine commanding Presence is accepted or rejected for no other reason than that it is that Presence. Now, from the nature of this choice emerges a momentous consequence: if and when a man chooses to accept the divine commanding Presence, he does nothing less than accept the divine will as *though it were his own.*

But how is this humanly possible? Or, to restate our original question to reveal with full clarity what is at stake: how can man, in the very moment which most starkly discloses the gap between him and God, presume to bridge that gap by accepting God's will simply because it is God's—thus making it his own? More simply, how can man presume to act out of love for the sake of God?

VI

Even prophets such as Isaiah and Jeremiah shrank from this question when they first confronted it in their lives. Therefore, a philosopher may certainly be permitted to avoid it, or at least to hold it in suspension, and turn from the primordial moment which initiates the revealed morality of Judaism to the developed life of that morality itself. Here revelation becomes a system of specified laws and commandments, and insofar as these are moral in nature, they possess undoubted permanence and undoubted intrinsic value. A Jeremiah may believe that in one situation God demands resistance to the enemy, whereas in another He demands submission. But one cannot conceive of Jeremiah as believing that God demands justice or love in one situation and injustice or hatred in another. Just how moral law can achieve permanence and intrinsic value within the framework of a revealed morality is a deep and weighty question that we shall attempt to deal with a little later on. There can be no serious doubt, however, that it has achieved such permanence in Judaism.

This achievement in itself may suggest to the philosopher that once permanent law of intrinsic value makes its appearance in Judaism, the divine commanding Presence of the primordial moment vanishes into an irrelevant past. For what could be the function of such a Presence after the primordial moment? If it contradicted moral standards already possessed by men, its voice would surely have to be rejected, as a voice of temptation. And if it confirmed these standards, it would only tell what was already known. In short, once revelation has become specified as a system of laws, an additional commanding Presence is either false or superfluous.

Now, if this were the full truth of the matter,

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then revealed moral law in Judaism would allow of only two human responses. Either one could obey it for its own sake, by recognizing and appropriating it for its intrinsic value; but then the divine giver of the law would become irrelevant, and so would the revealed nature of the law itself. Or else one could obey it *because* it is revealed; but then one could not obey it either for God's sake or for its own. Not for God's sake because the divine, having lost commanding Presence (or immediacy) by virtue of the rise of law, would have been reduced to the mere external sanction behind the law; not for its own sake because the law would have to be taken as standing in need of such sanctions. In short, one would be driven back to the Kantian alternative between a "moral theology" which is essentially unrevealed, and a "theological morality" which is less than fully moral.

But *must* the divine Presence pass into irrelevance once revealed moral law has appeared? To ask this question is to recognize that the Kantian alternative contains a hidden premise. This premise, to be sure, is hard to reject. But Judaism must be taken as implicitly rejecting it. Kant holds that moral law, in mediating between man and God, rules out or renders irrelevant an immediate divine commanding Presence. Judaism affirms that, despite the mediating function of the revealed moral law, the divine can still be present in commanding immediacy. Thus the Torah is given whenever men are ready to receive it (*Midrash Tanhuma, Yitro*). And this act of receiving it culminates in the confrontation with its giver. The prophet, to be sure, imparts a specific message; but the words "Thus saith the Lord" are not an empty preamble —they are part of the message itself. Kant's hidden premise, then, is that moral law is a barrier between man and its divine giver. The premise of Judaism is that it is a *bridge*.

How can the law be a bridge? Only by making a most startling demand. For Kant, all morality (religious morality included) demands a twofold relationship—between man and his fellow man. The revealed morality of Judaism demands a threefold relationship involving man, his fellow man, and God Himself. If it demanded only a relationship between men, then God would indeed be reduced to the mere external sanction behind the demand. The startling claim of the revealed morality of Judaism is that God Himself enters into the relationship. He confronts man with the demand that he turn to his human neighbor, and in so doing turn back to God Himself. Micah's well-known summary of the commandments does more than list three commandments which exist side by side. It articulates various aspects of an internally related whole. A man walks humbly before God only if he is just and merciful to his fellow man; and a man is capable only of fragmentary justice and mercy unless he is humble before God. Here lies the very core of Jewish morality.*

It follows, then, that the human response to the divine demand remains incomplete until the commandments are performed both for their own sake and for God's sake. Further, each of these imperatives must point or lead to the other. Unless the commandments are performed for their own sake, men cannot enter the threefold relationship which involves taking the human neighbor seriously in his own right. In other words, unless performed for their own sake, the commandments remain merely within an attempted twofold relationship between man and God. We say "attempted," for such a relationship is rejected by God Himself, who bids man to take his neighbor seriously in his own right. In doing so a man accepts both his neighbor, and the commandment concerning him, as possessing intrinsic value. Thus, he performs the commandment for its own sake.

And yet the commandment remains incompletely performed if performed for its own sake alone. For if the act of performing it reveals the human neighbor—as well as the performer himself—to be of intrinsic value, this is ultimately because the divine commanding Presence so reveals them. Thus, even the man who begins by accepting only the content of the revelation is finally led to confront the divine revealer. This is why performance of the commandment for *its* sake points to its performance for *God's* sake.

In Jewish teaching, then, the two reasons for performing the commandment have an integral and necessary relation. In the last analysis this is so because God is not removed beyond direct human access and relevance by the intrinsic value of man and the intrinsic value of the commandment which relates man to man. On the contrary, He discloses Himself through all intrinsic value, as being its ultimate source. And the man who accepts this disclosure acts for the sake of God. In the hour of his martyrdom Rabbi Akiba knew that the love of God is not one commandment standing side by side with others. It is the life of all.

* The point is perfectly expressed in a Midrash in which God is made to say: "Would that they had deserted me, and kept my Torah; for if they had occupied themselves with Torah, the leaven which is in it would have brought them back to me" (*Pesikta Kahana* XV). Liberal writers are fond of quoting only the first half of this Midrash, thereby perverting a profound statement of the morality of Judaism into a humanistic platitude.

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VII

EVIDENTLY, then, our refuge in the revealed moral law of Judaism—the refuge we took from the momentous question raised by a consideration of the pristine moment of divine commanding Presence—provides only limited safety, if by "safety" is meant the comfortable distance, and hence irrelevance, of the divine. We first saw that even in this pristine moment the possibility of free human appropriation exists. We have now seen that even when human freedom appropriates specific laws and commandments endowed with permanence and intrinsic value, the divine commanding Presence continues to confront it. Divine commanding Presence and appropriating human freedom still point to each other, and the philosophical question raised by their relation can no longer be suspended or avoided. In the light of the foregoing we can now reformulate that question as follows: how can man presume to participate in a threefold relationship which involves not only his fellow man but also God Himself? How can he act out of love for the sake of God—as he must in order to participate in this relationship—when God is God and man is only human? In Kantian language, what is the condition of the possibility of such action?

Kant himself did not shrink from this question; he even supplied an answer to it. But his answer is not and cannot be the Jewish answer. We have here come upon a final parting of ways.

Kant writes: "The virtuous man fears God without being afraid of Him. This is because he is not worried lest he himself might wish to resist Him or His commandments. God is awe-inspiring to him because such resistance, while unthinkable in his own case, is not in itself impossible." For Kant's virtuous man, it is "unthinkable" that he might not will the will of God. By contrast, for the Hebrew prophet, when first singled out, it is unthinkable that he *could* will it. To fear God at all, Kant's virtuous man must imagine himself willing what he is in fact incapable of willing. The rabbis, however, need no such strategy in order to stand in fear of God. Their inconceivable possibility is not the fear, but rather the love, of God. For Kant, the oneness of the human with the divine will is assured once virtue is achieved. For prophets and rabbis, such oneness is very far from assured even for the virtuous man, and indeed, in one sense, for him least of all. For in the minds of the prophets and rabbis, there is an endless gulf between God who is God and man who is only human. How, then, is the oneness of wills possible at all?

The answer is that it is possible if God Himself has made it possible. Man can appropriate divine commandments if they are handed over for human appropriation. He can live by the Torah in the love of and for the sake of God if the Torah itself is a gift of divine love that makes such a life a human possibility. He can participate in a threefold relationship which involves God Himself if God—who in His power does not need man—in His love nevertheless chooses to need him.

The belief in the reality of this divine love is as pervasive in Judaism as is the belief in revealed law itself. It holds that divine commandment and divine love are not only coeval, but also inseparable. The Torah manifests love in the very act of manifesting commandments; for in commanding *humans* rather than angels, it accepts these humans in their humanity. In accepting the Torah, man can accept himself as God accepts him—in his humanity. Consequently, to attempt to perform the commandments both for their sake and for the sake of God is not to attempt the humanly impossible. At least in principle the commandments *can* be so performed. And when they are truly performed, they are performed in joy.

This belief in a divine love made manifest in the divine commandment is present in Judaism from its earliest beginnings and continues throughout its history. If the prophet initially draws back from the divine commanding Presence, he ends by accepting it because he has experienced the divine love which makes acceptance possible. Similarly, one of the daily prayers throughout Jewish history renders thanks for the divine love which has given the commandments.

But if this faith so permeates Jewish life, why has Jewish thought, when confronted with Kant's challenge, failed to raise it to philosophical consciousness? I suggest that one reason is the reliance of Jewish philosophers on non-Jewish modes of thought in which an ancient prejudice against Judaism is reinforced by an ignorance of Judaism (even Kant may be included here). This prejudice contrasts Jewish law with Christian love—though the invidiousness of the contrast is modified slightly by the concession that the concept of love "evolves" in later stages of Judaism. To insist that divine love is as ancient in Judaism as divine commandment remains an inadequate reply, for it still allows the possibility that such love is confined, in Pelagian style, to the remitting of sins which strict justice would condemn: thus law itself would still be prior to love and in itself loveless. The proper reply to this anti-Judaic prejudice is that divine love in Judaism is manifested *within* the com-

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mandments, not merely subsequent to them, and that human joy is not projected into a future beyond the life of the commandments, but is to be found within that life itself as well.

Now it is precisely this teaching that St. Paul could not comprehend or else could not accept. He asserted not only that the commandments cannot be performed wholly—an idea which was not new to the rabbis—but also that they cannot be performed at all, because man is commanded to act for God's sake by a God who is incommensurate with all things human. In saying this, St. Paul failed to recognize—or perhaps to experience—the divine love which, by handing the commandments over for human appropriation, makes their performance a human possibility.

Kant's moral philosophy furnishes both a protest against, and a decisive restatement of, St. Paul's conclusion that the revealed morality of Judaism is based on a human impossibility. Kant rightly insisted that man can be morally obligated to do only what he is able to do; hence where an unbridgeable gap exists between the human and the divine, divine commandments cannot be moral commandments. However, Kant also refused—and again rightly—to divorce the divine from the moral, which compelled him to deny the gap between the divine and the human. The end result was that the divine will became a moral redundancy. Kant's protest against St. Paul's position, however, shares one assumption with it—the denial that divine love is manifest in the God-given commandment. Thus from the standpoint of the revealed morality of Judaism, Kant becomes the nemesis of a tradition which begins with St. Paul.

VIII

THROUGHOUT this discussion the term "Judaism" has referred to the classical Judaism of the Hebrew Bible and the rabbinic literature. The question remains whether the Jewish philosopher of today can do more than re-enact this classical faith in his mind. Can he accept it himself? It is all too obvious that faith in a divine love made manifest in revealed commandments is subject to pressures of the gravest kind, and not only from modern life but from modern thought as well. All that we can say here about an inquiry into the question is that a Jewish philosopher who conducts it must not surrender too quickly to these modern pressures. For if there is anything that makes him a *Jewish* philosopher, it is precisely the duty to confront, and take seriously, his own Jewish tradition. He would fail in his duty both as a philosopher and a Jew if he were ever to forget that his ancestors, at any rate, were able to live by the belief that "when the Torah came into the world, freedom came into the world."

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GEORGE LICHTHEIM

THE TORY SUCCESSION: A LONDON LETTER

LONDON

CALIGULA made his horse a Consul; Mr. Macmillan has made Lord Home—or Sir Alexander Douglas-Home, as he is henceforth to be known—Prime Minister. That, more or less, sums up the reaction of the more cynical commentators to the surprising outcome of our latest political upheaval. The joke is perhaps getting a little stale, but it will do for an occasion so heavily flavored with traditionalism. No doubt we shall also be hearing the other one, about the empty taxi that drew up in front of No. 10 Downing Street—"and then the Prime Minister got out." (This one was originally coined during the Attlee administration.)

Speaking of horses, a Tory newspaper normally loyal to the party recalls the story of the pre-1914 cavalry lieutenant who was told by his instructor: "The role of cavalry in wartime is to give tone to what would otherwise be a vulgar brawl." Tone is what this new government has plenty of. Whether it also has the drive to get on with the country's urgently necessary modernization is a question now much debated. The initial reactions are not favorable. The Opposition is scornful; many of the younger Conservatives are resentful; even the *Times* is tepid. The independent (and pro-Butler) *Sunday Times,* organ of the New Conservatism, is furious. Its star commentator, William Rees-Mogg, has been wringing his hands and predicting disaster. So, on television, has Mr. Henry Fairlie, the most bellicose of Tory journalists, who called the new Prime Minister a "silly ass."

If I appear to be lighthearted about so grave a matter as the future of the Tory party, the explanation doubtless is that an outsider can always afford to take the long view. On this view—but then Keynes warned us against long runs—the Conservatives are quite likely to bounce back (after losing the coming election) when the electorate has got bored with Mr. Wilson and his crew, who now look like a dead certainty for the years 1964–8. But they will need to come back in the later 60's with a different kind of leadership: one clad in a boiler suit, or perhaps an astronaut's outfit, clutching a computer and babbling wildly about electronics. If they are really going to stick to tradition, they are sunk. New Frontiers are all the rage now—at least for conversational purposes—and Labor is dead set to win the technologists. Since Harold Wilson's public bid for the allegiance of the scientific community at this month's Labor party conference (just a week before Macmillan's sudden resignation started the crisis), it has been clear that a new vocabulary has come into existence. The fourteenth Earl of Home, for all his patrician good looks and his undoubted good qualities, is no match for C. P. Snow's "New Men."

(Note to the historian: in last July's *Encounter,* Mr. Fairlie, who is now so upset about the Conservatives missing the bus, contributed a complacent little piece dismissing as nonsense all the alarmist talk about Britain needing a drastic overhaul, and censuring his fellow-writers for being ready to sell their historic birthright for a mess of technocratic pottage.)

How did it all happen? The insiders and the gossip columnists, with their unfailing eye for the trivial and the unimportant, have an explanation: it was Macmillan's doing. Determined to stop Butler, against whom—so the story runs—he nursed an obscure grudge, he pulled every possible string from his hospital bed to prevent his Deputy Premier from succeeding him. (The post of Deputy has now been abolished, although Butler himself remains as Foreign Secretary: there is to be no officially designated Pretender on the next occasion, whenever that may be.)

That Macmillan precipitated the upheaval is undeniable. He could, after all, have postponed his

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resignation until the annual party conference had been wound up, and the 4,000 delegates representing the Tory constituency members had streamed back to their suburban homes. By timing his long-awaited departure to fall plumb into the center of the annual whirlpool, he set off a tidal wave which could only result in his Deputy Premier being washed overboard. For Richard Austen Butler, though the strongest man in the Cabinet and the biggest brain of Conservatism, was unpopular with most of the delegates at the annual jamboree. To imagine that Macmillan did not know this would be excessively naïve. It is no argument to say he could not have foreseen his own sudden illness (he was in fact ready to announce his determination to carry on, when the doctors stopped him). The point is that, having at last made up his mind to resign, he might have waited another week before making the announcement. It was the timing that doomed Butler and almost threw the succession to his chief rival, the able but demagogic Quintin Hogg, alias Lord Hailsham: darling of the party regulars, though far from popular with his Cabinet colleagues. And it was the strategy of allowing Butler, Hailsham, and Maudling (the third contender), to knock each other out that determined the ultimate choice of Home as the only possible compromise candidate.

So far one may agree with the insiders. One may also detect the characteristic flavor of the Macmillan reign in the touch of frivolity which dictated the final choice. The fourteenth Earl, though personally likable and far from incompetent, was a ready-made target for Mr. Wilson's shafts. Already the Labor leader has pulled out of his capacious vocabulary all the Lloyd-Georgian clichés most likely to appeal to voters torn between Liberal and Labor sentiments. The new Prime Minister is being depicted as an effete nobleman, the titled leader of an aristocratic cabal, a living anachronism, the embodiment of all that is keeping the country safe for the elderly and the incompetent. Tears are being shed for Mr. Butler; it is broadly hinted that the Conservative party is split down the middle since the resignation from the Cabinet of Messrs. Powell and Macleod, standard-bearers of the progressive wing. Much of this is the ordinary cant of politics, but some of it is going to stick. With the election less than a year away, the Conservatives will now need a near miracle to pull off a fourth successive victory. They will not be helped by the impression that the Establishment has tightened its death-grip on the country. When Wilson talks about "so many of our young men in industry" being held down by "the dead hand of family and hereditary appointments," he is hitting a sensitive nerve (and incidentally serving notice that Socialism is becoming ever less distinguishable from the New Frontier). Labor is now committed to efficiency and the career open to the talents: meritocrats please note. Mr. Wilson, a clever boy from a lower-middle-class home (his father was a chemist), knows his audience. So do Macleod and Powell, the two Tory rebels, who like Wilson came up the hard way (well, almost).

There is, then, something in the contention that Macmillan imposed his personal choice (and that of his family circle, once it was realized that Hailsham's bandwagon had run out of steam), in contemptuous disregard of wider issues. But this is only half the story. If the fourteenth Earl represents the dying kick of the Tory aristocracy—a caste now largely made up of elderly noblemen who hire their castles out to sightseers, including American tourists—he was nonetheless Foreign Secretary in a government that arranged the liquidation of Britain's residual African empire, contrived to let South Africa retire from the Commonwealth, and carried out no more than a rear-guard action in defense of Belgian interests in Katanga and Portuguese interests in Angola. At home, the Macmillan government was committed to the welfare state and, in the end, even (though very reluctantly) to economic planning. Abroad it consistently followed the American lead, and—less consistently—the Commonwealth line it had inherited from the postwar Labor government. It also tried—belatedly and unsuccessfully—to get into the Common Market, and in the process flouted old-fashioned imperialists like Beaverbrook. None of this was exactly to the taste of the really deep-blue Tories; in fact, to many of them Macmillan began to look like a renegade from the true faith. If, after last December's Skybolt fiasco, he had not brought back at least the Polaris deal from his Nassau meeting with President Kennedy, they might have revolted. Nassau, it is true, gave de Gaulle the excuse he needed for barring Britain from "Europe," but to the right-wing Tories this did not seem a major disaster. Most of them had never fancied the idea of association with all those foreigners anyway.

But if the right wing was still just barely able to tag along behind Macmillan—largely because from time to time the fourteenth Earl spoke up in the brave old accents, though with little practical result—it was determined not to have Butler. The legend that it was his support of Munich which

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wrecked Butler's chance dies hard. No doubt Churchill, Salisbury, and Macmillan combined against him in 1957—when Eden's throne was vacant—partly on that basis. But after all the Earl of Home had been the greatest Municheer of all: he was Chamberlain's parliamentary private secretary in 1938, and a determined champion of Appeasement at almost any cost. No, Munich had little to do with Butler's discomfiture on this—probably the final—occasion. It was rather his evasiveness over Suez that rankled with the embattled gentlemen and ladies from the local Tory party organizations. That, and his record as a reformer at the Home Office after 1955 (he was against flogging, and only doubtfully for the death penalty), and his general air of caring more for welfare policies and domestic progress than for imperial greatness: his very latest act as Deputy Premier was to arrange for the quiet liquidation of the Central African Federation, thereby making it virtually certain that Northern Rhodesia at least will soon come under African majority rule.

There is a well-authenticated suspicion in the minds of some observers that if Britain had managed to get into the Common Market, Mr. Butler —helped by Messrs. Powell and Macleod, who refused to take office when his rival prevailed—would have turned his subtle mind to the problem of transforming the Conservative party into something resembling Dr. Adenauer's Christian-Democratic Union. This would have necessitated better relations with the trade unions (if they could be prized loose from the Labor party) and an ideological shift away from traditional Toryism. On the other hand, he is probably equally ready—and this is the gravamen of the charge against him —to promote an "Atlantic" and pro-American orientation if it turns out that Britain's road into Europe is permanently barred. In fact, there are those who complain that Butler's flexibility amounts almost to opportunism. In a party where anti-American feeling runs strongly beneath the surface, this suspicion is a handicap. It was also noticed that the *Economist* never wavered in its allegiance to Butler, and the *Economist* is the foremost champion of Atlanticism and unconditional loyalty to the United States (where a good half of its influential readership resides). None of this was of much use to Butler when the Tory regulars met at Blackpool. His strongest support lay in the Cabinet room, and the Cabinet let him down: only half his colleagues—instead of two-thirds, as was expected—came down strongly on his side, while others wavered or divided their support among his rivals. The chief of these, Reginald Maudling—with over a hundred parliamentary backbenchers cheering him like a matinee star—foolishly held out for the supreme prize, instead of throwing his support to Butler while there was still time. And so the dark horse won the race, and the public was treated to the spectacle of the Tory succession being decided by the outgoing Prime Minister, who told the Queen that only the Earl of Home could hold the government together.

FOR ALL THE inevitable talk of "feudalism," the whole affair is no more than a rear-guard action so far as the Tory aristocracy is concerned. That class is now almost extinct, and the disappearance of the Empire has removed its last *raison d'être*. The real problem is what sort of response the Conservative party is going to make to Mr. Wilson's renovated Labor Socialism, with its faith in Planning, Automation, and Efficiency; not to mention the Liberals, who are busy like termites eating into the loyal Conservative following in the middle-class suburbs. It would have been difficult enough even with Butler or Maudling at the helm; with Home it is going to be next to impossible. Yet Home was needed if the true-blue Tories—already cheated of their darling Hailsham—were to be kept quiet, or rather busy working for the party in next year's election. It has been the misfortune of Conservatism that Macmillan did good by stealth, instead of providing the party and the country with a broad political education. The public was never told more than half the truth about Britain's changed position in the world; major departures, such as the liquidation of the African empire, or the unsuccessful takeover bid for the leadership of Western Europe, were presented as business-like moves, instead of being dramatized; and even the retreat from uninhibited market liberalism *à la* Erhard to planning *à la française,* was so carefully camouflaged that hardly anyone but the experts noticed it. The result was that the modernization of the Conservative party got stuck halfway, while the public never realized that something important was happening.

All this was part of the Macmillan style—a habit of making unobtrusive moves in the Edwardian manner, when what was wanted was a grand Churchillian or Gaullist confrontation. It is perhaps the most serious charge against Macmillan as Prime Minister and party leader that he tried to conduct policy behind the backs of his own followers. The word "trickster" was always close to the surface when Tories grumbled about him in private. No doubt he was right in thinking that a head-on clash with the Old Guard might have split

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the party; no doubt, too, the process of unobtrusive accommodation to reality will continue under Home (and would have continued under Hogg-Hailsham, for all his frenzied ringing of ideological and other bells). But there is all the difference between welcoming the future, and backing into it in a half-hearted fashion. Wilson's Laborites—even Grimond's Liberals, for all the intellectual windiness which seems to be part of the modern Liberal makeup—do convey the impression of being enthusiastic about the age of technology, and willing to dispense with traditional symbols such as unrestricted national sovereignty. No one can suspect the Tories of enthusiasm for any of these things. Their appeal now is bound to be to the elderly and the tradition-bound.

This is the danger the Conservative left-wingers have sensed. With Butler or Maudling in charge, they would have shed their traditionalist image and come forward as the British counterpart if not of the New Frontier (*that* image has been grabbed by Wilson), at least of liberal Republicanism *à la* Rockefeller. As matters stand, they are bound, in their hearts, to concede the 1964 election to Labor, whatever they may say in public. The problem for them lies in capturing the party after the almost inevitable defeat. Here a grotesque irrelevancy adds to their discomfort: if the Tory representation in Parliament is sharply reduced, their supporters are likely to be the heaviest sufferers, since most of them entered the House in 1955 and 1959, and their seats are less well protected than those of the Old Guard. The hundred or so backbenchers who form Maudling's personal bodyguard—as well as being the vanguard of "managerial" neo-Conservatism—are the most likely victims of a Labor landslide. Since the leadership is heavily dependent on the Parliamentary party—though we have just seen that other factors can also intervene—this might leave the right wing in control after a shattering defeat brought on by its own ineptitude. In that case civil war is quite likely to break out among the Conservatives, along the lines of Labor's internal split in the 1950's. Since at the moment it looks as though the Conservatives will poll no more than ten million votes in 1964, against fifteen million for Labor and about five million for the Liberals, the massacre at the polls might be large enough to halve their parliamentary strength; and it is the liberal wing which would suffer most.

It is thus with complete disaster staring them in the face that the Conservative "reformers" now contemplate the political upheaval brought about by Macmillan's last-minute surrender to the Old Guard. Already there is talk of Macleod playing the part of a Tory Aneurin Bevan and, Samson-like, bringing the pillars of the Temple down upon the heads of the oligarchy in possession. In fact, the "modernists" face a task more nearly akin to that of Gaitskell and his friends after Labor's defeat in 1959. They must somehow take their party away from the Old Guard and recast it in their own image, if Conservatism is not to dwindle away into the powerless rump it has become in Social-Democratic Sweden. The danger is very real, for a few years of Labor government—if not dogged by economic trouble—might easily accustom the electorate to the idea that Conservatism is out of fashion. Mr. Wilson is doing what he can to spread this notion, and unless he is very badly let down by his colleagues when he gets into office (unfortunately for him, the Labor front-bench at the moment looks pretty weak), he might just pull it off. The scales are certainly much more narrowly balanced than they were a couple of years ago: before the Labor party had modernized itself, and before the great psychological gear-shift in the public's attitude had occurred.

This shift is something of a mystery. Who, a few years ago, would have expected a solid Conservative newspaper like the *Sunday Times* to go into raptures over technology, and to warn its readers that in view of the vastly accelerating pace of technical and social change, "the whole of government is . . . based on an almost heroic effort to foresee the course of a technological explosion and plot its needs . . . any Conservative Government now has to prove that it understands and can deal with the process. . . . This is vital because revolutions do not give one much time . . . any government which lacks an understanding of the revolution in which it is living is bound to fail" (October 20, editorial)? Strange language for a Tory organ. The paper's star columnist, writing the day after the fourteenth Earl of Home became Prime Minister, had this to say: "I now know of no convincing argument which I could put to a young scientist or university teacher to persuade him that the Conservative Party was both the best way of fulfilling his political ideas and a party in which he would be at home, an equal in his own natural environment." Well, it never was. But the whole point is that the Young Turks had almost got to the point of persuading themselves that they could pull it off. With Macleod entrenched as head of the party machine—he has now been shoved out—and Macmillan apparently favoring the palace revolution, they saw themselves with victory in

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their grasp. Disappointment is now acute, but the real fight has only begun. It is going to get really savage if Sir Alexander next year leads Toryism to its electoral Waterloo.

Perhaps all this commotion up and down the country is evidence that there is life in the old lion yet. Materially he is in fairly good shape just now —for a change the economy is booming, even exports are going up—and getting a new set of technological teeth. The obstacles to genuine modernization are institutional and social rather than economic. Some of them were discussed in *Encounter*'s special "crisis" issue last July. Unfortunately, most of the contributions were so amateurish as to underscore the editorial complaint that professional competence was not wanted. There is certainly plenty of amateurism about, and even more blinkered insularity: notably in the educational Establishment and the Civil Service, neither of which exactly corresponds to the needs of an industrial society (there is still not a single institution of higher learning of the standing of MIT or the *Polytechnique,* and no immediate plans to create one). It is sometimes odd to see what passes for radicalism in this tradition-bound country. Thus the Labor party is now committed to the creation of two dozen small arts colleges on the existing pattern, and this is trumpeted as a great step forward, when what is needed is half a dozen *large* new universities, with a minimum of ten to fifteen thousand students each, located in industrial cities, and with enormously enlarged science faculties in part subsidized by the surrounding industries, whose employees should be compulsorily educated to the age of eighteen and beyond. Notwithstanding official acceptance of the controversial Robbins Report on higher education, this is still a long way off. Yet progress is on its way, however reluctantly. All three political parties are now publicly committed to the idea that science, though nasty, is important, and that efficiency, though ungentlemanly, is a good thing.

Lest I sound too enamored of C. P. Snow and his cult of scientism, let me hasten to add that I never thought much of the notion of Two Cultures (he has now raised the number to three). There is only *one* culture, and Shakespeare is infinitely more important to it than the Second Law of Thermodynamics. In fact, thermodynamics has nothing whatever to do with culture, and can safely be ignored by anyone in search of a liberal education. It is, however, important to the educational infrastructure, and will have to be taught on a large scale to the hundreds of thousands of working-class and lower-middle-class boys and girls who—if all goes well—may find school places by 1975. This is now the real issue, compared with which all others shrink, for automation is a real chance for a country that is short of raw materials and has to make use of its brains. It is to the credit of all concerned that this truth is no longer strenuously resisted. In their different ways, Socialists, Liberals, and Conservatives have learned to speak the same language—even Lord Hailsham styles himself Minister of Science (though why a lawyer had to be given this post is one of those British mysteries) and talks earnestly of bringing the country up to date. With so much unanimity about what ought to be the goal, it seems almost inevitable that something or other is in fact going to be done.

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SYDOR REY

STELLA—A Story

I told all my friends that I would certainly marry now. When they asked me, "What's happened?" I replied: "My first love has appeared in New York."

Stella had not been my first love; and though I had been in love with her once, that was not why I decided to marry her. The real reason was a deep sense of duty, and I used the first-love theme to give it a light touch.

As a result of my decision, my life had once more become meaningful. My state of mind did not lead me to question whether Stella wanted to marry me. I took it for granted that being alone in the world now, she would let me brighten her life. Nor did I let myself think that she might bring me a little happiness, too. Why should I be made happy, I who had lived through the war in New York not only in complete security but also surrounded with comforts? Stella had gone through hell, and happiness was owed to her.

Each of us was forty years old—Stella one day older than I—but in my eyes she was still a young and beautiful high-school student. The image that arises in us at a lofty moment of decision is always stronger than any reality that contradicts it. Also, the illusion of her youth accompanied the illusion of my own youth.

And yet Stella's laughter had actually remained unchanged; her voice had the same sound as before, and her nostrils quivered in the same way. Her freckles reminded me of dried flowers that you had once plucked and then placed in a book; like such flowers she still emanated a spring-like breath.

I had first seen Stella when I was sixteen. I was spending Christmas with her oldest brother Filko, who had stayed with us for two weeks during the summer vacations. Asleep in semi-darkness, covered with a colorful cloth, her face was pale, her hair golden, and there were tiny freckles around her nose.

I asked Filko why Stella was so pale. He said that Edek, the boy with whom she was in love, had moved to another town with his family, and that Stella was terribly upset.

I stayed with them for three days, and for those three days I was madly in love with Stella. During all that time I scarcely exchanged three words with her. Stella was always hidden somewhere, and was absent even during meals. She suffered because of Edek's departure, and I because of her, as if I were trying to imitate her in her suffering. Filko had the greatest sympathy for me. He was not surprised that I had fallen in love with his sister, he worshipped her himself and told me that he dreamed of her double.

Stella was an only daughter; toward her five brothers and her father she behaved as if she were the only woman in the world. Her brothers and father were not jealous of Edek; they looked upon him as their deputy destined to perform a specific function with regard to Stella, and as having become for this reason a member of the family. When the family realized that I was in love with Stella, they began to regard me, too, as one of them.

They seemed to fancy that their family was a self-sufficient institution, which never needed an outsider; they seemed to live, as it were, on the brink of incest, and as a result, an atmosphere full of ardor and strength prevailed in their home.

They were extremely moral and subtle.

I knew Edek well. He was older than Stella and I by two years—he reminded us, his younger schoolmates, of Theseus on a Greek vase, while the older ones admired his relationship with his widowed mother, to whose support he had contributed from his earliest age. Despite his physical strength, Edek was unusually pale (this contributed to his "mythical" look), and despite his courageousness he was unusually subtle and almost girlishly gentle. It was this combination of delicacy and virility that made such a tremendous impression on us boys.

We found it hard to believe that Edek had fallen in love with Stella. We thought that the girl had no right to appropriate such an exceptional boy: he should belong to all of us, to the boys. We did not believe that Edek had fallen in love with her, she had merely forced him somehow to yield to her . . .

But whom could Stella have brought as an offer-

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ing to her family, if not Edek? What other brother was she to give her handsome brothers? She had conquered Edek for her family. The family did not lose Stella, it gained Edek. That is why Filko welcomed Stella's love so joyously.

After my visit I returned home to discover that I remembered it as three days of happiness. During my subsequent visits, I became convinced that between Stella and myself there had developed a tie which was a subtle kind of reciprocal love. Stella had somehow convinced me that had it not been for Edek she would have returned my love—and this became a form of fulfillment.

Our parents were great friends. The friendship between our fathers was animated, between our mothers quiet, even silent. Both Stella's mother and my mother worked hard, our fathers amused themselves—it was nothing boisterous, they played at being active members of the community and leaders of society.

Stella's father was tall, handsome, strong, and very elegant. He had once been a sergeant of the mounted police, but immediately after marrying he had opened a tavern—his father-in-law was the warehouseman of the local brewery. This was a tavern for artisans and successful peasants. Everyone advised Stella's father to open a restaurant for landowners and the intelligentsia, but he was a proud man, he wanted his customers to look up to him, not the other way around. And actually, whenever he made a rare appearance in his tavern, all the customers bowed deeply to him. At such moments he always behaved as if he were not the owner, but an inspector on an official tour.

Stella's mother managed the tavern. She did not serve; she stood behind the counter, acted as the cashier, and supervised the help. With her strikingly white complexion, clear probing eyes, and ash-gray hair, she was beautiful despite her stoutness, and had an imperious look. Her severity set her apart from the animated, playful customers; she was like the priestess of a temple, while they were the faithful. So, at least, it seemed to me at the time.

Stella's parents were not rich, though their business was highly profitable. They spent a great deal of money on the education of their children, lived in grand style, gave parties and receptions, contributed to charities, and helped even the most distant relatives and friends. They also spent a great deal in wages for help in the tavern and at home.

They often hired tramps, and somehow were never disappointed in them. Their employees stayed with them for many years and even when one left, he never lost contact with them. The employees never stole; their masters did not watch them, they watched each other . . . Stella's family was a tribe, so strong that each time I came to visit her I myself became a member, as if I had no family of my own.

After graduating from the gymnasium, Stella left for France to study dentistry. Edek had gone there some years before to study medicine (as a result of the *numerus clausus* he had been barred from medical studies in Poland, even though he had passed his baccalaureate exams with the highest honors). Stella and Edek lived together in France, and married only after returning to Poland. If someone had told her family that Stella and Edek were living together in Paris, they would not have believed it simply because they trusted in Edek's tactfulness.

Edek finished his studies two years before Stella, and for those two years worked in a clinic; then both returned to Poland, and after obtaining confirmation of their foreign degrees, settled in Silesia, where Edek became the idol of the miners in his region. By then the Nazis had begun to infiltrate the province, but whenever someone informed Edek's townsmen that their favorite doctor was a Jew, they laughed, either because they disbelieved this or because they did not care.

The war had found Stella, her husband, and her three-year-old daughter still in Silesia. From there they had fled the Nazis to Soviet-occupied territory. Her husband was appointed director of our region's health department. Everybody around him stole; he controlled everything, but never took anything. Years later, Edek's honesty was still the essential feature of Stella's account of that period.

"I scolded him," she would say to me, during our talks in New York. "I wanted him to steal at least as much as his subordinates, for we had a hard time . . . But you know Edek, to tell him to steal was like telling him, forgive the expression, to eat s – – t."

In 1941 the German-Soviet war broke out and Edek was mobilized. He could not permit himself to join the "strategic retreat"; he stayed with the wounded and sick, and was captured by the Germans in the very first days of the war.

He did not live long. It would not have occurred to the Germans that Edek was of Jewish origin, had he not several times defended Jewish prisoners of war. In the end the Germans simply could not afford such stature and behavior on the part of a Jew.

So STELLA related the circumstances of Edek's death. In the years that followed, she seemed to have grown angry at Edek rather than at the Germans, and spoke like a mother remembering an imprudent child.

In the very first days of the Nazi occupation she took Edek's mother and sister to her home and her child to her parents. Her brothers were either in the Soviet army or hiding in the woods. (All of them were killed except for the youngest, who was saved by Hania, the daughter of one of their servants; though she was a Ukrainian, he married her after the war and at her suggestion they went to Israel.)

The wife of one of Stella's schoolmates lived on the first floor above the apartment she occupied with her husband's mother and sister. Stella often stayed

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with her friend, whose husband, a Polish officer, had been a German prisoner since 1939. The two bereaved women liked to be together; moreover, Stella felt safer in her friend's home because she was a so-called "Aryan."

One day Stella was about to leave her friend's apartment, as usual very cautiously, when she heard on the floor below someone asking for her. She realized that Gestapo agents, accompanied by Ukrainian militiamen, had come to arrest her.

She did not linger, but rushed to her neighbor's apartment, grabbed the latter's coat and kerchief and walked down the stairs. The janitor stood in the doorway with a militiaman. Covering her face with the kerchief, Stella calmly slipped by, unrecognized by the janitor. In this way she escaped death for the first time. The Gestapo agents sent Edek's mother and sister to their deaths, although they had come for *her*, as the wife of "a Bolshevik dignitary."

Stella related this incident as though in the third person, obviously wanting me to share her view of her clever escape as a manifestation of brutal egoism and at the same time as a moment of inspiration, and to suggest that such was the nature of man and of herself.

She hid in her parents' home, where she had previously left her child. But she could not stay there long. The mass extermination of Jews had not begun, but Stella was a special case, for the collaborators had denounced her as a "Bolshevik."

She found a place of refuge in the neighboring woods and stayed there for almost a year. Then a friend of the family, a Roman Catholic priest from a nearby factory town, obtained "Aryan papers" for her, and she was sent to forced labor in Germany with a group of village women.

I could sense that Stella was concealing something from me; something had happened during her period in the woods, which she was unwilling or unable to reveal. Several times she returned to that period of her story, but each time stopped abruptly after the words "yes, yes, for a year I hid in the woods," and laughed helplessly. In fact she dismissed the whole episode with one sentence. She did not say with whom she had hidden in the woods, who had helped her, and in what circumstances. Or perhaps she did not remember, and did not want to remember. Such a defensive amnesia was possible. Had not Stella deserted her own child when going to the woods in order to save her life? Had she not left her daughter with her parents, and had not her daughter later been killed with them? It was best for her to let that period sink into oblivion . . . And yet she wanted me to realize that she had deserted her child. Well, both things were possible.

In Germany she had worked in a munitions factory, where there were workers from almost all the European countries. Next to her in the shop was a Pole; their foreman was a Spaniard.

"I somehow can't believe that you are a peasant girl," the Pole said to her one day, smiling ironically. "It's not the way you look. There's a war on, everybody looks refined; but you speak Polish like an educated person, and what would an educated person be doing here? I think you're Jewish."

"You're having a hard time here," the Spanish foreman told her a short time later. "Your neighbor is an unpleasant fellow. I'm sure you'd rather be a domestic servant . . ."

Stella did not answer him, but less than a week later she was sent to serve in the home of a German captain. When she was leaving the factory, the Spaniard asked her: "Is your neighbor a real Pole? He complained that your Polish is too good, and what Pole would complain that the Polish of a compatriot of his is too good?"

She served in the captain's house till the very end, till the entry of the Soviet army.

It seemed, from her story, that she had saved her life by her own efforts only once, when she left her mother-in-law and sister-in-law at the mercy of the Gestapo, and calmly walked down the stairs. After that, everything had been a matter of accident, or else she had defended herself unconsciously, as when she had left her daughter with her parents and had gone to the woods.

AFTER THE WAR Stella had gone to live in Sweden. It was then that I first heard she was alive and would like to hear from me. I had not written to her, for I was skeptical about the whole thing. Perhaps I did not really believe that Stella had survived; perhaps I doubted that she wanted me to write to her. This was immediately after the war, and I probably doubted that anyone besides myself had survived.

Later I learned that Stella was planning to come to the United States, and after a few years she actually did. The friend who told me this gave me her telephone number, and said that she wanted me to call her. Now I understood why Stella had not written to me from Sweden but had asked instead that I write to her. What she wanted then was not a letter, just as now she did not want a telephone call: she expected me to come for her, to take her to my home.

Stella met me with her familiar laugh: it was like the intermittent, joyful barking of a dog, and one could perceive in this laughter the distant echo of anger, like that of a dog who had waited too long. Or was it merely derision? Her attire—suède shoes, a pleated skirt, a suède jacket, and a beret—suggested both the student and the society woman, a touch of the scamp, and a touch of the lady.

Stella had been brought to America by her former nurse, Rozia. When Rozia had emigrated to America, Stella was still a little girl. In parting Rozia had said to her: "If you ever come to visit me I'll receive you as a mother."

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Rozia was small, the same height as her tow-headed husband Semion who was of Byelorussian origin, and like her had worked for years in a women's clothing factory where they had met. They had a daughter in her twenties who had been idle since an automobile accident. Her fiancé was a former medical student who worked as a masseur but often spoke of resuming his studies. He was of Italian descent—dark-haired, muscular, but with a gentle face. Without him, it seemed, this young woman would have disintegrated. Because she was tall, handsome, and outwardly unspoiled by her accident, her physical dependence on the handsome young man resembled a melancholy sexual passion.

Rozia and Semion knew that their daughter could have returned to work and to her interrupted studies, but rather than urge her, or display the slightest annoyance with her, they treated her with extreme tenderness. All their lives they had been factory workers, laboring hard and struggling to improve working conditions, and now the idle, comfortable life of their only daughter appeared to them as an act of social justice—it was high time for a worker's daughter to enjoy a bit of luxury.

Rozia and Semion were well-read, enlightened, sophisticated New York workers, had attended evening courses for years, and owned a fine collection of books and phonograph records. They had bought a house in Queens out of what they earned. Of red brick, and covered with tiles, it had white stairs, flowers beds in front, a garden and trees in back, and stood on a quiet, broad, tree-lined street. The spacious rooms had fireplaces, and were uncluttered by their furniture, suggesting something of the freedom, discretion, and seriousness of Stella's former family house.

Indeed, Stella came to her former nurse as to her own mother: she distinctly recalled Rozia's body, her arms, breasts, neck, and face. Nor was Rozia's relation to Stella any less natural: nothing in it reminded one of the attitude of a grateful debtor to a noble creditor. They belonged to one tribe, and this was the basis of their harmony.

After a few of my visits, Rozia began to treat me as she treated her daughter's fiancé—as the support of a young woman who had lived through such a terrible catastrophe. When I decided that it was my duty to marry Stella, I felt that Stella and I were close to each other anyway, that we belonged to the same tribe, so that our marriage would be a mere formality, sanctioning a previously existing bond.

DURING OUR first talk in New York in Rozia's quiet garden, I recalled our childhood, our families, schools, and neighborhood, but Stella listened as if I were discussing matters entirely alien and even boring to her. Then we discussed what Stella could do in the United States. Rozia wanted her to obtain a license to practice dentistry in this country. She offered to support Stella during her preparations for the state examination. Rozia's husband, daughter, and her daughter's fiancé enthusiastically seconded her offer. Stella regarded it as completely natural, and was ready to take advantage of it, but she had plans of her own. She wanted to return to Sweden for a year, to work in a dental clinic for children, and only later to emigrate to the United States. At present she wanted to stay in New York for only six months and practice in a dental clinic for children, where she might learn a great deal. Stella's patients in the Swedish clinic were mostly children who had been in Nazi death camps, and her sarcastic remarks suggested that only children were worthwhile caring for, only children were human.

Late at night Stella's hosts left us alone in the garden. On the basis of some of my remarks, Stella must have guessed my decision in coming to her. Sitting beside each other on a stone bench, we heard, in the stillness, a piece by Debussy. Suddenly Stella burst out laughing in her doglike way and began to relate an incident that had happened to her shortly before leaving Sweden.

On the eve of her departure, a Swedish girl who worked in her clinic had walked her home, tenderly holding her arm. Entering Stella's apartment, she had begun to cry convulsively, confessing that she had been in love with Stella for a long time, in fact, from the moment they had met.

When Stella tried to convince her that this was a delusion, that she must be mistaken, the girl replied that it was Stella who was mistaken, that Stella herself longed for a woman's body; otherwise she would not have exerted this attraction so strongly and persistently.

Repeatedly sobbing, the girl spoke ardently, tenderly, as though in prayer. This was not her first love, but a love unprecedented in mind and strength; her feeling had been crucially influenced by Stella's wartime ordeals, by the thought of her maltreated female body. . . .

Stella was teasing me, this was obvious. But it was also certain that she felt a physical dislike for me because I was a male and wished to convey this to me. She laughingly reminisced about how wonderful it had been to cuddle to her mother's warm large breasts and neck. She often slept in the same bed with her mother even as a grown girl. Here in New York she was sleeping with Rozia whose body reminded her of her mother's.

Later she told me in detail about a terrible operation that had been performed on her in Sweden. Her gall bladder had been removed, along with ulcers and parts of her intestines; she had been literally cut to pieces. She told me she had been sure she would die on the operating table, but when she opened her eyes and was welcomed by a garland of smiling friends, she had thought that only at that moment the Nazi occupation, and her torments, had ended.

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Her doctors had been unable to understand how, with her ailments, she had lived through those terrible years of the Occupation.

Why did she tell me this, now, of all times, late at night, in this quiet little garden, amidst the chirping of crickets? Was she jeering at me—the man who had decided to build for her a warm family nest?

Each time I tried to divert Stella from her tortured past, she returned to it with passion. She seemed compelled to torment me, to say in so many words: "He lived through the war in comfort, and now he plays the angel. Come to your senses, man, realize what world you are living in."

I reminded her of the student ball, where we had danced a waltz that was like a momentary love affair. In response she told me of a party in the home of the German captain where she had been a servant.

This captain had a wife and two children, and had come on furlough one day from the eastern front, bringing with him liquor, meat, fruits, delicacies, and a mistress. Stella, who had been ill for a long time, suffered terribly that day, but she was afraid to complain, because she would have been sent to the hospital and liquidated. The guests ate, drank, and danced, and she served them. Suddenly, while working in the kitchen, she was seized with such fierce pains that she would surely have died had it not been for her extraordinary will to live. She lay quietly on the floor, telling herself that she would lie that way until she heard steps; and when she heard steps, she would get up, she would surely get up, for she did not want to die; no matter what might happen to her she would get up. . . . She heard steps, and before the captain had entered the kitchen she was on her feet. The captain stared at her for a moment, said *polnisches Schwein* and walked out, and she thought to herself, "I'll live."

"And you want to restore my faith in man?" Stella said. "Don't you think that it's rather I who should and can restore your faith in humanity? The very fact that I have survived is enough—this fact alone is proof of man's greatness."

Indeed, how could I restore her faith in humanity? I had generously decided to marry her—and that noble gesture on my part was to be an antidote to her horrible experiences! "I sat in a crowded car, on someone's bag," Stella said after a time, and began to relate the circumstances of her return to Poland after the Soviet army had entered Germany. "I sat there like someone who knows nothing and has nobody in the world. Perhaps everyone in that car felt the same . . . Suddenly I heard above me a man's beautiful cry, repeated three times, 'Stella, Stella, Stella!' I raised my eyes: before me stood a tall, emaciated, former schoolmate in the uniform of a Polish officer—he was returning from German captivity. He stared at me for a long time, then said, 'Stella, how beautiful you were,' and began to sob. I didn't cry, he was crying for me. His wife, who had lived in the same house as I until I ran away to my parents, had died . . . I imagined that this officer was Misio, who was so much like my husband, that Misio was alive and that I would marry him . . ."

I began to wonder if Stella had hoped in her heart that Misio would survive rather than Edek. Misio, who was a schoolmate of Edek's, had fallen in love with Stella after her marriage, and Stella, Edek, and Misio had formed a triangle, though Misio played a Platonic part. But if Stella and Misio had been more grasping, their relationship would not have remained Platonic. Stella could easily have lived with two men as alike as Edek and Misio; to live with Misio would not have betrayed Edek, Misio was his double.

THE EVOCATION of this old triangle stimulated her, and since Misio had not survived either, it now began to seem that her choice had fallen on me. She was clearly more and more cordial toward me; as she unfolded the story of her experiences, she drew closer to me.

It was then that I asked Stella in unambiguous terms to marry me. At first she seemed very happy; she laughed a long time in her barking manner, then apologized, went inside, and returned with a photograph. Handing it to me she asked, "Do you recognize this?"

The picture showed a human corpse. The body of a man dressed in city clothes lay near a village fence; he was bareheaded, and there was a flower behind his ear. That he was dead was obvious from the face, though it had not been disfigured by death. I did not know that man.

"A corpse," I whispered to myself.

"Of course, you can't recognize him," Stella cried as if this fact amused her. "This is Wasylcio."

"Which Wasylcio?"

"What do you mean, 'Which Wasylcio?' Wasylcio the fool . . . It was he who saved me. He hid me in the woods, and took care of me for a year."

Wasylcio had never looked like that. I remembered him very clearly. I had often seen him sweep the sidewalk in front of Stella's house, now and then crying, *"Arbeit, Arbeit!"* He was always ragged and barefoot, with a wild growth of hair and beard.

He had appeared during the First World War, no one knew from where, found a broom, and at once began to sweep the sidewalks, punctuating his work with the cry, *"Arbeit, Arbeit."* People would tease him, his flowers would fade, and when he had enough of all this, he would vanish again. It seemed that he ran away from people to the woods, and returned longing for people again.

Aside from the words *"Arbeit, Arbeit,"* he never said anything, never asked for anything. Women threw him some pittance, as to a starved dog, and occasionally a weeping drunk would thrust a piece of bread with sausage into his hands. No one knew

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his name. Someone nicknamed him "Wasylcio," because, before he had come, there had been a meek fellow like him in our town who bore that name. How could the dead body in the picture be Wasylcio?

"During the occupation a miracle happened with Wasylcio," Stella said, and burst out laughing. "He shaved, had his hair cut, got himself shoes, a decent suit, a necktie, and began to talk; whereupon, to make him a real man, the Germans shot him. But before then he had saved my life."

After the Germans came, Wasylcio suddenly stopped sweeping the streets, but instead of running away to the woods, he wandered about the town for a few days, moaning in a low voice, and occasionally his body, which had usually been so calm, would tremble. He walked around watching the cruelties committed by the Germans and their local henchmen. Then he vanished and for a long time did not reappear—as though he had sniffed the presence of death.

When he finally returned, he was transformed by his cleanliness and his decent clothes, and he talked—in three languages, Ukrainian, Polish, and German, though best in Ukrainian. Instead of sweeping sidewalks, he now began to polish boots for German officers.

He continued to behave like a meek little lamb, except for the fact that he had acquired human speech and appearance. Yet his two new characteristics were distinguished by such natural gracefulness, that everyone began to suspect that he came from some extraordinary family.

Rumors also spread that Wasylcio somehow helped people threatened by the Nazis, and that he helped women exclusively; either because he pitied them as weaker creatures, or because he remembered that women had shown him pity instead of tormenting him as men had done. One night he came to Stella and told her that he would take her to the woods, to a hideout where she would be completely secure. His miraculous metamorphosis aroused her confidence: there was something sublime in it. Moreover, Stella had nothing to lose, and so she followed Wasylcio. The hideout was perfectly camouflaged and equipped, and protected against the elements. It turned out that Wasylcio had many such hiding places scattered in the woods. He had prepared them for himself, for his own protection against people, but at the same time he had foreseen the advent of terrible times, when the weak would have to hide from the cruelty of the strong, as he himself had hidden.

And now Stella found shelter in one of Wasylcio's hideouts, and other women in others.

From remarks made by Wasylcio, Stella conjectured that he had emerged alive from some massacre during the First World War, in which everyone around him had been killed. His stupor had probably been the result of the shock caused by that incident; he himself had lost all memory of it.

For Stella, Wasylcio's sudden rebirth, his sudden flowering amidst the general decline and degradation of man, was a revelation of a new faith. Wasylcio visited her only rarely, and each time he entered her den, she received him with almost religious reverence.

"You can surely guess to what consequences such a cult led in those circumstances," Stella said in a whisper.

She began to have relations with Wasylcio; in the hideout this was the only possible form of ecstasy. Or was it gratitude? Or had she perhaps tried to attach him to her in this way, to secure his return?

Wasylcio was so subtle that he was almost absent in this love; Stella had been unaware each time of his part in the sexual act. Everything seemed to be done by her alone, it was like an intimate prayer. She was convinced that the women in the other hideouts had a similar relationship with Wasylcio; that all of them had wanted to repay him a debt, to attach him to themselves, as she had.

"Do you think that after Wasylcio I need someone to restore my faith in man?" Stella exclaimed, and she laughed like an amused child.

When Wasylcio was shot, Stella was in Germany as a slave laborer. One of Wasylcio's hideouts had been tracked down by a police hound. He was not there, but the woman was taken into custody and had revealed under torture his other hideouts.

The town commandant found the whole thing delightful: Wasylcio, the fool, his shoeshine boy, had a harem in the woods! He handled the case personally, and personally shot Wasylcio.

First he had ordered Wasylcio dressed elegantly, and Wasylcio did this willingly. Then the commandant ordered all women of the nearest village to be assembled to witness the execution. Before the shots had been fired, Wasylcio bent, picked up a flower, and placed it behind his ear. The commandant shot him, and then photographed the body. After the Germans' retreat the photograph had been discovered by Stella's brother.

WHEN Stella took back the picture that I had been holding while she told me her story, it suddenly seemed to me that the photograph of the dead Wasylcio was all that she had left as a woman: Wasylcio had been her last male—there was an expression of guilt in her eyes, as though she had devoured her last male.

I felt an unbearable tightening of the heart. "When are we going to marry?" I asked.

"We should not marry," she said. "We mustn't exaggerate, the fact that you are willing to marry me is enough."

Stella and I had ceased to belong to the same tribe; more than that, I felt that I was not a man in her eyes, not even a living human being. In her eyes only those who had fought for their lives were alive, only they belonged to the human race.

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A COMMENTARY REPORT

Anti-Communism & the Corporations

ALAN F. WESTIN

THROUGHOUT the United States today, hundreds of corporations are energetically engaged in programs to "educate" Americans about the nature and threat of Communism. Among those managing this enterprise are local hardware distributors and General Motors, fruit growers and Tidewater Oil, exterminator companies and R. J. Reynolds Tobacco. It is hard to fix the cost of these programs in cash outlays, executive man-hours, and work-time lost by participating employees, but the total cannot be less than twenty-five million dollars a year.

These corporate programs fall into two different categories (though many companies promote both simultaneously). First are "in-plant" materials for employees and management, ranging from distribution of anti-Communist literature in company bookracks or features in company newspapers to full-dress lecture courses and film cycles held on company property during company time. Second are "out-of-plant" programs, aimed at customers and at the communities in which the company has plants or main offices. Sometimes these efforts will be limited to distribution of anti-Communist literature, but often they take the form of corporate underwriting of "schools" and "seminars" on Communism for local teachers, clergymen, professional and businessmen, and civic leaders, with the companies supplying not only executives, films, and pamphlets, but also "scholarships" for community participants.

What explains this rush of the nation's incorporated to teach their employees and neighbors about Communism, in this 17th year of the cold war? Certain writers on the left—Fred J. Cook, for example—see it all as part of a "military-industrial" conspiracy to brainwash the public into accepting a policy of reactionary retrenchment at home and of military adventurism abroad. How much truth is there in this idea?

To begin with, it is certainly true that the corporate anti-Communist activity of the 1960's includes a number of flamboyant, openly "Birchite" programs, marked by full-strength radical-right indoctrination on "Communism" and "Americanism." Looking first at in-plant programs, such a Birchite course for employees is held at the Coleman Corporation in Wichita, Kansas ("the nation's largest manufacturers of gasoline lanterns and stoves"), whose president, Sheldon Coleman, is a leading patron of the Birch Society in his state. In the company's auditorium, films of speeches by Birch Society founder Robert Welch are shown, and company executives deliver lectures embodying Birch doctrines about the menace of Communism in America today.

In a suburb of Chicago, employees of the Flick-Ready Corporation, a machine-parts manufacturer, attend a six-session seminar on "Regimentation or Freedom," a rightist course designed by George A. Roberts of Texas and purchased widely by oil, gas, and utility corporations in Texas and the Southwest. Full of inane statements (Communism teaches that the "human race can be improved through scientific techniques of animal husbandry"), the Roberts course equates the socialist governments of Western Europe with Communism, relies on manufactured quotations from Khrushchev about bringing America to Communism through "small doses of Socialism," and draws its action-program for good citizenship from Harry T. Everingham, head of the radical-rightist group called "We, The People!"

Birchite programs of this type have also been presented to management officials attending the national conventions of several conservative industry associations. In 1961, for instance, the National Association of Real Estate Boards featured at its Miami meeting a course on Communism put on by the Miami Board of Realtors. The delegates were shown rightist films, were invited to attend the extremist National Indignation Convention, and were addressed by Eddie Rickenbacker, Chairman of the Board of Eastern Air Lines, who delivered his standard "Hail McCarthy, abolish the income tax, get out of the U.N." speech.

ALAN F. WESTIN—whose authoritative article on the John Birch Society in our August 1961 issue has been widely used—is associate professor of public law and government at Columbia. The present article is based on firsthand researches into the anti-Communist materials of more than one hundred corporations, and discussions with all the leading management associations, many corporate public affairs officers, and spokesmen for civic and labor groups.

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Educational activity by Birchite companies directed at their customers and local communities has also soared in the 1960's. In California, the Durand Door Supply Company distributed half a million copies of a four-page tabloid supplement on Communism that the firm originally sponsored in two West Coast Catholic newspapers. The supplement recommended that Americans fight Communism by: purchasing an anti-Communist home library which contained seven Birch Society articles and booklets; subscribing to radical-right periodicals like *American Opinion* (the Birch Society organ), *Dan Smoot's Report*, and the *Cardinal Mindszenty Bulletin*; joining California radical-right groups like the Network of Patriotic Letter Writers; and patronizing California book stores that feature Birch literature, like the Pro-Blue Book Shop in Torrance. In letters sent out to "Patriots" by the thousands, the company's president, Gilbert Durand, urged that anti-Communist films be obtained from "your local American Legion Post, D.A.R. or Birch Society." He added, "If you can't find a Birch Society in your community, please contact Birch Society, Belmont 79, Mass."

In Miami, Florida, the president of a large exterminator company, Truly-Nolen, recently announced to the press: "Now that America, and especially my own community, is so close to a communistic stronghold, I strongly feel it is my duty to devote a large portion of my advertising budget to the project of alerting my fellow citizens to the dangers of Communism." Fired by this resolve, the company outfitted one hundred of its trucks as "Anti-Communist Lending Libraries." Dade County residents were invited to stop the trucks, check out "hard-hitting" tracts on Communism, pay a fifty-cent deposit, and return the books to any Truly-Nolen driver for a refund or for another book.

IN MANY states, "Freedom Bookracks" have been installed in major supermarket chains and drug stores. Dealing exclusively with "Communism," these bookracks feature rightist tomes like *Yalta Betrayal* and *No Wonder We're Losing*. According to the distributor, they have been designed for "high-traffic" stores because "we feel information about the Communist threat and the need for pro-Americanism is not readily available to the American public." Complaints about the rightist line of the volumes were sloughed off by the executives of one supermarket chain with the comment that the books had "no political line"; they were just "anti-Communist." Retail grocers and food distributors in the western states have been the special target of a rightist leader in that industry, Hamilton Stone, whose program for his colleagues includes giving extremist anti-Communist literature to customers at checkout stands of markets, educating company employees in ultra-right doctrines, having management join "study groups" that are fighting Communism, and "screening" all books sold in the store to make sure that none are "anti-American."

Probably the most extensive customer-community "educational" campaign is conducted by Coast Federal Savings and Loan Association of Los Angeles, one of the five largest savings and loan institutions in the country (with assets of over $500 million). Coast Federal is a well-publicized supporter of rightist causes. Through its Free Enterprise Bureau, budgeted at $250,000 yearly, Coast Federal maintains thirty-eight speakers and distributes more than two million pieces of literature designed to "re-educate [sic] the American public *away* from Socialist and Communist Myths and *back* to a belief in the American Free Enterprise Truths." A fine sample of the "Myths and Truths" literature that Coast Federal distributes to customers and in the community is an *Americanism I. Q. Test*, written by S. A. Adair of the Free Enterprise Bureau and circulated over Coast Federal's imprint. The test presents 133 questions, with a "correct" set of answers supplied at the end. Under the heading of "Foreign Affairs," for example, these answers require one to "disapprove" all the items listed, which include "long-range foreign aid," "Radio Free Europe," "international meetings such as the Geneva Conference," and "Voice of America." (In fact, nothing is given under "Foreign Affairs" that a Coast Federal true American can approve.)

Similarly, under "Legislative, Executive and Judicial," it is "American" to approve a balanced budget, capital punishment, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the Reece Report on foundations, and a return to the Gold Standard. It is not American to approve of the Peace Corps, subsidies to farmers, TVA, and extension of social security.

Perhaps the most fascinating part of the questionnaire is the "Myths and Truths" section which Coast Federal distributes in various versions as its favorite means of educating people about American Free Enterprise and Communism. It turns out that all thirty-one items listed in this questionnaire are "Myths." Sample things that no "good" American would believe:

There is no Communist menace in the United States.
The more complex a society, the more Government control is needed.
The most prevalent problem of the modern world is atomic energy.
Russia is increasing its production faster than the United States.
Taxation of personal incomes is the best way to support the Government.
Society benefits from minimum wage laws as the standard of living is increased.
The Federal Government can provide for the needy better than private charity organizations.
By assisting backward nations, the United States

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government will teach them the ideals of freedom. Human rights are above property rights.

The reader who faithfully registers his answers to these 133 questions learns from the "Rating Scale" that a score of over 110 "'correct" represents a "Libertarian"; 51–90, "Varying degrees of Republicans and Independent Democrats"; 30–35, "New Frontiersman"; and under 30: "Are you sure you wouldn't prefer England or points further East?"

When several depositors wrote Coast Federal to complain about getting this type of "political" material, the bank's supervisor for Research and Development, Robert D. Norton, replied that "fighting Communism and selling American Free Enterprise" was the company's "business obligation." For the past fifty years, Norton explained, the American public "has not had a fair chance to see both sides of the coin before making their decisions." Since this campaign was also "producing a good return in new customers . . . we think we'll keep it up."

Other examples of Birchite programs could be described involving "activist" firms like Knotts Berry Farm and Dr. Ross Dog Food in California; Cherokee Textile Mills in Tennessee; Spindale Mills in North Carolina; the Allen-Bradley Corporation of Wisconsin; the Warner and Swasey Company in Ohio; and perhaps a dozen more.

LOOKING carefully at these straight Birchite programs, it can be seen that most of the sponsoring firms are small and middle-sized businesses located in fundamentalist centers like California ("where the Far West meets the Far Right"), pockets of the South, and the southern tier of the Midwest. The few substantial firms relying on Birchite materials turn out to be either companies led by a single, "I-did-it-myself" entrepreneur (like Joel Crail of Coast Federal or Fred Koch of Koch Engineering), or else companies under family management (like the Coleman Corporation under Sheldon Coleman; H. Masland & Sons Carpets, under Frank Masland; and A. B. Chance Company, under F. Gano Chance). In both cases, company funds are used as personal resources of the "owners."*

Such activity must be carefully distinguished from the conduct of the large, publicly owned, and executive-managed corporations, like Standard Oil, Alcoa, and IBM—the enterprises that dominate industrial life in America and set the tone for most major firms. What of these "blue-chip" companies? Have they been urging Birch Society and Christian Crusade materials, either for in-plant or outside-the-gate programs? Many unfortunately have. For example, *Communism on the Map* (a one-hour film strip known as *Communist Encirclement* in its 1961 and '62 versions and written by a Birch Society stalwart who drew heavily from Robert Welch's Blue Book) has been used by hundreds of blue-chip companies, including Goodyear Tire, Minnesota Mining, Aluminum Corporation of America, Boeing Airplane Co., Jones & Laughlin Steel, Revere Copper & Brass, Convair, Arkansas-Missouri Power Co., Texas Power & Light, Shick Safety Razor, Ohio Bell Telephone, and North American Aviation. Considering the fact that the Birch origins of *Communism on the Map* were widely exposed in the press in the spring of 1962, one might think that its use by major corporations would have fallen off sharply. Even Dr. Fred Schwarz of the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, who used to show the film at his "schools," announced in 1962 that he would no longer do so and that its previous use had been a mistake. Yet the film continues to be a best-seller in the corporate world, and not only for showings to employees, but also for active community programs of these companies.

In addition to using indefensible films, many companies have been using indefensible "experts" as speakers in their programs. For example, Boeing, the 19th largest company in the nation, with 88,000 employees and over one billion dollars in defense contracts, presented Dr. Nicholas Nyaradi to its Supervisors Club in Seattle on October 31, 1961. Billed as a discussion of anti-Communism, the speech featured such remarks as Dr. Nyaradi's view of the twenty-six African nations that joined the U.N. in 1960:

> When I watched last year the procession of those distinguished tribal chieftains and witch-doctors as they paraded down there in UN headquarters, with their very fancy headgears and their leopard skin coats and what-not, at the very same time a wild rumour swept the halls of the UN. According to this, it was said that the president of one of those new republics, the Republic of Gabon, five years ago ate up his own mother-in-law. Well, the rumour was neither confirmed nor denied. But as I watched these distinguished witch-doctors, honestly speaking, I couldn't help but believe that the main reason why they came to New York was to study the American food processing industry. They must have been interested in how to prepare instant missionary, or frozen TV explorer dinners, or what-not.†

Boeing reprinted this speech, bristling with similar points about "first- and second-generation cannibals," and distributed it to Boeing management as a worthwhile contribution to education about Communism.

* It is worth noting that many of the corporate executives from major firms who appear as activists in Birchite organizations often turn out to be retired, paralleling the phenomenon of retired generals and admirals. For example, Birchites from large corporations include men such as the late Cola G. Parker, former president of Kimberley-Clark; B. Edwin Hutchinson, former chairman of the Finance Committee of Chrysler; or Louis Ruthenberg, former president and chairman of the board of Servel, Inc.

† Quoted in *The American Liberal*, July 1962, p 7.

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And Nyaradi is also a regular performer at the in-plant programs on Communism of other corporations, and at forums and schools put on for businessmen by extreme rightist organizations.

Apart from all this, we find blue-chip firms involved in sponsoring "community seminars" on Communism, through financial contributions, executive participation, and employee scholarships. In California, for example, a group named Project Alert held a "School of Anti-Communism" in Los Angeles during December of 1961 which was put on television by the Southern California Edison Co., the Carnation Milk Co., and the Pacific Indemnity Insurance Co. One speaker on the program urged that Chief Justice Warren be hanged, not impeached (he was chided by the sponsors for going quite that far); several retired admirals and generals said the Kennedy administration was soft on Communism; another speaker demanded that the U.S. free the former Baltic nations from Soviet rule by telling the Russians "to get out within a certain time and if they didn't I would commence shooting. If we have to blow up Moscow, that's too bad"; and still another speaker said that eight years after Senator Jenner had warned that Communists were still in "all levels of the U.S. Government, . . . the housecleaning which is so long overdue" had still not taken place.

THE blue-chip corporate community has also been represented in abundance at another and similar type of seminar—the Freedom Forums held annually by the National Education Program, producers of *Communism on the Map*. In recent years, these have been organized around the central theme of Communism, and offer such stellar lights of the John Birch Society as Tom Anderson, Clarence Manion, and Glenn Green as speakers, along with Eddie Rickenbacker and other assorted rightists. In 1961 and 1962, the following companies, among others, sent executives (many of them the training or public affairs officers at company plants) to soak in this priceless education: Boeing Aircraft, Houston Lighting and Power, Monsanto Chemical, Gulf Oil, Southwestern Bell Telephone, Stockham Valves and Fittings, Pontiac Motor Division, Quaker Oats, and Goodyear Tire and Rubber. Sitting alongside executives from these companies, as fellow-participants at the Freedom Forum in 1961 or 1962, were representatives of the following rightist groups: John Birch Society, Four Freedoms, Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, Americanism vs. Communism, Letters of Correspondence, Christian Economics, and Lamplighter Study Group. What is even more important is that, despite the publicity given to the extremist character of National Education Program materials, top company executives from firms such as Swift and Co., Monsanto Chemical, General Electric, Armco Steel, and Mississippi Power, still sit on the Freedom Forum Advisory Committee. Under this blue-chip sponsorship, the National Education Program boasts that it has persuaded over one thousand corporations to use its materials on Communism for employee and executive educational programs and to send people to the Freedom Forums.

Still another major link between blue-chip corporations and nonsense anti-Communism involves the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade of Dr. Fred Schwarz. Schwarz himself, as careful accounts of his activities have indicated, is not the typical "rightist." He does not call for abolishing the income tax or impeaching Earl Warren; nor is he against the Peace Corps or the Alliance for Progress. His central message is that Communism has deluded intellectuals, liberals, and many Americans in all walks of life, and that only a massive crusade against the Communists can save us from an inevitable Communist take-over. The characteristics of the Schwarz movement are: (1) a roster of speakers that includes many radical-right figures who add the specific rightist appeals that Schwarz himself avoids (speakers like W. Cleon Skouson, for example, who demands a house-cleaning of the State Department, a break in diplomatic relations with all Communist and neutralist countries, withdrawal from the U.N., etc.); (2) a complete absence of liberal anti-Communists or social-democratic anti-Communists from school platforms; (3) a tendency to allow Birch Society and other radical-right groups to attach themselves to the schools in order to recruit new members from among the audiences.

The negativism and rightist character of the Schwarz movement received much publicity in 1962. Labor groups in California boycotted his rallies, and distinguished church, educational, and civic groups condemned the rancid emotionalism of his meetings and their uselessness in fostering a proper understanding of Communism. Nevertheless, the costs of putting Schwarz rallies on television and distributing Schwarz speeches have been paid by such major companies as Richfield Oil, Technicolor, Union Oil, Deering-Milliken, United Aircraft, and many other firms. A newspaper advertisement endorsing a Schwarz rally was signed by top executives from Rexall Drugs, Air Finance Co., United Whelan Corp., Bank of America, Diners Club, E. F. Hutton & Co., Manufacturers Trust Co., and over a dozen other blue-chip firms. Schwarz's special lunches for businessmen, furthermore, have attracted as many as five hundred to six hundred participants at a time in West Coast, Midwestern, and Southern cities. In 1962, such a luncheon in Seattle brought executives from Wigwam Stores, Standard Insurance Co., Boeing Aircraft, National Bank of Commerce, Associated Grocers, and Puget Sound Bridge and Dredge Co. into the hall to support the Schwarz "crusade" in that city.

Besides securing corporate money and participa-

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tion in community schools, Schwarz has recently been arranging in-plant courses on Communism. Groups such as the Convair Aircraft Management Club, the Douglas Aircraft Management Club, and Great Lakes Management Club are listed in Schwarz literature as satisfied endorsers of his programs for corporate education. Encouraged by all this, Schwarz is now calling on every corporation in the country to set up a Department of Anti-Communism, just as there are now Public Relations or Sales Departments. This new department would run anti-Communist educational programs for management, employees, and the public, support research into Communism, and finance the Schwarz schools, both directly and by providing scholarships for civic leaders and enrolling of company workers and executives.

Thus even among the major "sophisticated" companies there is evidence that corporate activity in anti-Communist education has included heavy doses of radical-rightist material. But what about the charge that these programs present a military-industrial conspiracy and are only a cover for a "right-to-work-law," "arms-race" drive by big business?

In the first place, those who accept the conspiracy theory completely rule out the possibility that most corporate leaders may be genuinely motivated by a sense of civic and patriotic duty in sponsoring programs to study Communism and to strengthen knowledge about the American system. Yet there are many examples of intelligent, balanced—and, indeed, even liberal—corporate anti-Communist programs now in existence.

Looking first at the in-plant operations, much responsible literature about Communism has been distributed to employees through bookracks and literature tables. Almost two million copies of a condensation of the Harry and Bonaro Overstreet best-seller, *What We Must Know About Communism,* have been put on the company bookracks of blue-chip firms like General Motors, Kimberley-Clark, United States Steel, Western Electric, Bendix, Gulf Oil, Du Pont, and North American Insurance.

The Brown and Bigelow Division of Standard Packaging Corporation, itself one of the nation's largest corporations, published in 1962 *The Trial of Freedom,* a twenty-three-page booklet comparing the American and Soviet systems, edited by Hardy E. Wright. Based on close consultation with the State Department and the U.S.I.A., the booklet uses reliable sources and shows sound judgment in portraying the contrast of systems. Corporations have distributed over a million copies of this publication (another million have been distributed by labor unions, schools, service clubs, and the armed forces). Among the firms that have given *The Trial of Freedom* to their employees have been General Electric, Southern Pacific Railway, Pratt & Whitney, Mobiloil, General Telephone Co., Beech Aircraft, Sinclair Pipelines, Brown-Forman Distillers, United States Plywood, Consolidated Edison of New York, Monsanto Chemical, Provident Mutual Life Insurance Co., Illinois Bell Telephone, John Hancock Life Insurance Co., and Pullman.

As for anti-Communist films, many companies have used sound documentaries produced by Federal agencies, such as *Communist Propaganda,* narrated by then U.S.I.A. chief George Allen; *The Communist Weapon of Allure,* narrated by Professor Warren Walsh of Syracuse University; and *The Challenge of Ideas,* narrated by Edward R. Murrow. Other companies have used the thirteen half-hour films in the National Educational Television Co.'s series, "The Red Myth," as well as kinescopes of leading network documentaries like NBC's *Nightmare in Red* and CBS's *The Red Sell.*

A prime source of good films on Communism and democracy used by corporations is a New York distributing agency called Association Films, Inc., which put together in late 1962 a large group of "Films for Freedom" and made them available on a "free-loan basis" to corporations, unions, and civic groups. The films fall into six categories: "The American Tradition: Freedom and Enterprise"; "Spokesmen for Freedom"; "In Defense of Freedom"; "The Alien Philosophies: Communism and Fascism"; "World Trade: Bulwark of Freedom"; and "Freedom from Want." In addition to commercial and government films, the collection includes films made or sponsored by major corporations like Prudential Insurance Co. of America (from its distinguished television documentary series, "The Twentieth Century"), American Airlines, New England Life, Firestone Tire & Rubber, United Fruit, Gulf Oil, Corning Glass, First National City Bank, U.S. Steel, and American Steamship Lines. Senator Harrison A. Williams, Jr. of New Jersey, a liberal Democrat, has praised the program as a positive step toward giving Americans "essential facts about complex matters." An increasing number of corporations have been drawing on the series recently for their in-plant and community programs.

In the area of discussion programs sponsored for company employees, one admirable step was taken in 1961–62 by the Hormel Company. Hormel polled those of its employees who had completed a voluntary "practical politics" program offered by the company, asking how many were interested in pursuing the study of Communism. When more than 70 per cent of the "graduates" expressed a desire to have such instruction, Hormel arranged for an evening lecture-discussion course at the Adult Community Division of a college in Minnesota, and several large classes of Hormel employees have been studying there at company expense.

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Sending employees to regular colleges and universities has not been the norm, however. Most companies prefer to provide programs within the plant with company personnel and guest lecturers. Probably the most widely used program in the 1960's has stemmed from a course titled "Freedom vs. Communism: The Economics of Survival," published by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 1961. The advertising promotion for this program tells prospective purchasers that "The course is *not* a highly emotional, Communist 'witch-hunting' exercise. It is designed to give participants an opportunity to make an informed, objective appraisal of the Communist challenge with major emphasis devoted to comparing our private competitive economic system with the economic system of Communist Russia." Each participant in this course receives eight booklets: "The Communist Challenge"; "Consumer Control or Controlled Consumers"; "Profit Motive or Master Plan"; "Who Gets What"; "The Role of Government"; "The Big Picture"; "Meeting the Economic Challenge"; and "What You Can Do About Communism." The booklets are written crisply and clearly, and present a well-documented summary of the two systems under each of the comparative headings, making careful distinctions between liberals, progressives, social reformers, and democrats on the one hand, and Communists on the other, and warning that any loose merging of the two categories is improper and dangerous. While the economic analysis reflects a full commitment to the capitalist system from a business perspective, it is not anti-union, anti-welfare, or anti-government; in fact, without the identifying imprint of the Chamber, few readers would recognize this literature as stemming from the same group that usually issues far more conservative publications in the area of economics and public affairs.

Since 1961, several hundred corporations have used the Chamber's course. These include Corning Glass, Armstrong Cork, Humble Oil, Southern Bell Telephone, Caterpillar Tractor, Borg-Warner, Gulf Power, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing, General Electric, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco, and Standard Oil of California. A spokesman for the Chamber who manages the course commented that the project was working out nicely as a positive antidote "to the kind of meeting that gets people stirred up with no place to go, except on Red Hunts. Ours are not run by people with a living to make out of extremism."

Turning to responsible corporate activities in the community sphere, one leading example is "Project Awake!," an effort begun in 1960 by a Seattle-based group known as Greater America, Inc. (and completely unrelated to the extremist Project Alert). Taking as its text the need for the citizen to aid government in proving to the world the advantages of a free society over Communism, "Project Awake!" —whose Board of Trustees includes executives from General Mills, Pacific National Bank, B. F. Goodrich, Time, Weyerhauser, and Continental, Inc.— urges a long look at the Soviet Union's strengths and weaknesses, then a similar look at "our American heritage, not only its freedoms, but its responsibilities." Among the materials prepared by "Project Awake!" have been reprints of articles by J. Edgar Hoover, George Meany, George Romney, and Assistant Secretary of State Francis Wilcox, and books by Adlai Stevenson, Clarence Randall, Dr. Henry L. Roberts of Columbia University, the Overstreets, and *American Strategy for the Nuclear Age,* a symposium of diverse views.

In any account of responsible corporate anti-Communist educational activity, the Great Decisions program of the Foreign Policy Association deserves prominent mention. This annual program—which has been bitterly attacked by the radical right as a sellout to the "soft-on-Communism crowd"—presents key U.S.-Soviet issues as part of a general discussion format in world affairs, with the Association supplying participants with fact sheets, diverse policy proposals, and leading questions. Corporate leaders who have served as chairmen of the Great Decisions program committee include such men as William Cutchins, president of Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company, and Edwin Cushman, vice-president of American Motors; and companies that have sponsored Great Decisions programs, either within their plants or in the surrounding community, include John Hancock Life Insurance, Continental Oil, Minneapolis-Honeywell, Pacific Telephone Company, Citizens Trust Co. of Boston, Pontiac Motors, Welch Grape Juice, and Northwestern Mutual Insurance Co.

Even more interesting is the pilot "Contexts" program offered by the Foreign Policy Association as a one-year, small group discussion course on foreign affairs for corporate executives. Based on collected readings (including a first-rate set on Communism compiled by Professor Philip Mosely), the Contexts program is deliberately made "intellectually demanding" and is run throughout the year while the corporate executives are carrying on their normal business affairs. The first company that experimented with the course, the Sandia Corporation in Albuquerque, New Mexico, sent twenty executives, from vice presidents to department managers, and seventeen of the twenty participants completed the twenty-six-session course. Sandia is now ready to start several more groups and other corporations will be added as the Foreign Policy Association develops the program for general use.

It is important to note that about $180,000 of the Foreign Policy Association's budget comes from corporate contributions, and its Board of Directors reads like a Burke's Peerage of American industry.

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The head of Kennecott Copper is there, as are the heads of Federated Stores, General Tire & Rubber, Burlington Industries, IBM, and Pitney-Bowes. So, too, with the chairmen of the Association's industry-by-industry fund-raising committees, who include top executives from Eastern Air Lines, American Motors, Chemstrand, Westinghouse, United States Lines, Hotel Corporation of America, Elizabeth Arden, Bank of New York, and Southern Natural Gas.

IT IS clear, then, that corporate anti-Communist educational activity is a mixed bag, containing responsible programs as well as irresponsible ones. Often, indeed, this mixture can be found within the same firm. For example, Tidewater Oil, an industrial giant with assets of almost 1 billion dollars, embarked in 1962 on a major program called "Your Stake in Freedom," designed "to provide facts about the philosophy and practical mechanics of democracy and Communism." The program's literature stresses that it "neither uses material developed by an extremist group, nor gives circulation to any partisan political philosophy. It is designed to unify Tidewater citizens in the cause of freedom." Some aspects of the Tidewater program are thoroughly commendable. The company's house organ, *Tidewater News,* has serialized Dr. Roger Swearingen's primer, *The World of Communism,* which a New York *Times* review described as an "outstanding contribution" to popular understanding of this field. Each employee has also received *The Trial of Freedom.* Yet along with materials such as these, Tidewater has proudly shown each employee *Communism on the Map,* as well as another ultra-rightist film, *Communist Accent on Youth,* produced by Pepperdine College in Los Angeles, a leading sponsor of rightist literature and forums.

The fact that responsible and irresponsible elements can be found within the programs of the same companies makes it clear that liberal critics like Cook are wrong in their belief that every action taken by every company official within large corporate systems is centrally directed. Moreover, to take the rightist views that may be held in one company as indicative of the thinking of all other companies in that industry or area is like judging the labor movement by Hoffa and Hutchinson or the Truman administration by Harry Vaughan and T. Lamar Caudle—something liberal critics would quite properly resent. Nor would they be any less resentful of the application to themselves of the guilt-by-association doctrines which they use in assuming that the presence of some authentic radical righters in a corporation makes *all* executives of that corporation like-minded men.

Finally, the liberal conspiracy-finders set a line between "acceptable" and "radical-right" positions that often consigns automatically to the latter camp all corporate leaders who advocate stronger military, propaganda, and ideological efforts against the Communists. I do not mean "drop the bomb now" doctrines, but serious proposals that would raise American pressure in the cold war. Such ideas are stamped "ultra," and once so branded, they become "conspiracies" to be denounced, rather than proposals to be debated on the field of reason. Any suggestion that the proper line at which to set the radical-right boundary is one that stops at civic-ruffian tactics in the Birch manner, racist tones in the Hargis pattern, smear campaigns as practiced by the Circuit Riders, or wholly adventurist military proposals, is dismissed as a hopelessly narrow definition of who is radical-right in America. In short, this brand of liberal demonology pays the Birch Society the supreme compliment of imitating it.

BUT IF a master-plan of reaction does not explain the recent flurry of corporate anti-Communist educational activity, what does explain it? The first factor that sheds light on this development, it seems to me, is the widespread desire to "learn more about Communism" that arose in the 1958–62 period when many Americans—ironically for the first time—began to realize that the Communist world was not going to be wished away, even by a Republican administration. Communism had achieved immense scientific and military successes, while we were fumbling through crises in Cuba, Laos, and Berlin abroad, and worrying inconclusively over fallout shelters and "national goals" at home. Underlying the "study Communism" mood was a desire to understand why all this was happening, and a genuine impulse to "do something" about it. With a Democratic administration in Washington, and the "party of business" displaced from the White House, however, businessmen caught up in the "do-something" mood could not turn their energies into regular political channels, and educational and advertising campaigns were an obvious alternative. Moreover, businesmen, having generally regained some popular status during the Eisenhower years, were uncomfortable at being displaced once again, and anti-Communist education under business sponsorship seemed a way to recover prestige.

But apart from questions of national mood, the recent company programs on Communism represent the latest phase in a larger evolutionary process within industry itself. Twentieth-century corporations have traditionally distributed literature and held courses for management personnel, and the courts have been increasingly liberal in recognizing such activity as a business expense and a tax-deductible operation. In the 1930's, the Wagner National Labor Relations Act placed some restrictions on the freedom of corporations to "pressure" employees with economic or political materials. But in the 1940's—because the unions were conducting

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extensive campaigns of "information" which management saw as essentially "anti-business" and because employees were being bombarded by "government propaganda" in favor of "Fair Deal" spending, welfare, and business regulation programs—the business community began pressing for the right to communicate more directly with employees. This "employer free speech" right was authorized by the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, touching off a wave of bookrack programs and courses on economics for employees. By the late 1950's, 84 per cent of the nation's 500 largest corporations were offering educational programs to their employees, among which, in many cases, were courses in "practical politics." Designed at first primarily for management personnel and billed as non-partisan (the goal was to get more people active in civic and political affairs), these courses were gradually extended by most large companies to include all interested employees. That most employees impelled into politics would become Republicans—or at least Harry Byrd Democrats—was a possibility and a hope not entirely absent from corporate thinking. By 1961–62, however, the politics programs had just about run out of steam. Something new was needed, and the expanding bureaucracy that had been created by the growth in recent years of Public Affairs Departments (more than 100 major corporations now have them) found in the "study Communism" mood a welcome source of fresh programs to administer.

These three factors—interest in learning more about Communism, displacement of corporate leaders from the national administration, and the general educational surge within companies—must be kept in mind when considering why corporate anti-Communist programs developed. To explain why these programs so often mixed the responsible with the irresponsible, three additional factors should be noted.

First, thinking about Communism within major corporations has been heavily affected by the views of company industrial-security officers and by the advice of special private firms set up to provide loyalty-security checks and "subversive control" for industry. Most corporations dropped or muted their "industrial security" operations in the 1930's, as a result of growing union legitimacy and Wagner Act enforcement. But in the 1950's the cold war put defense industries back into this enterprise. Some four to six million employees were required to obtain security clearances, and federal regulations left it up to the companies themselves, or their hired agencies, to clear anyone who would have access to "confidential" data. (The federal government conducted the investigations only when "secret" or "top secret" clearances were necessary.) As a result, company security departments came into being to sift what employees read, joined, and thought, and arch-conservative outfits like the American Security Council were formed to provide outside help. These operations, drawing heavily on ex-FBI agents and ex-loyalty officers from federal and state loyalty programs, made of industry in the late 1950's and early 1960's a gathering place for many persons obsessed with overblown fears of Communist infiltration. Thus a careful inquiry into a nonsense anti-Communist program often reveals that it was the security officer who selected the films, or "represented" the company at the seminars, or had primary control over the content of the company courses, while another department lent the company's name and cash to the Foreign Policy Association or "Project Awake!"

Second, it is a cold fact that many corporate leaders have been easily manipulated by the hucksters of the ultra-right. Operators from such groups call on company executives and announce that the leading firms in the community are sending some people or giving money to a great "anti-Communist rally"; surely the *X* company will not want its name missing from the distinguished roster of sponsors? Many companies—sometimes to their subsequent regret—have found it easier to pay the hundred dollars or thousand dollars than to investigate the group or to risk offending prominent people by a refusal. There is no little irony in the fact that many of the same businessmen who once denounced liberal and labor "dupes" for letting their names be used by Communists in the late 1930's and early 1940's have been used in an identical fashion by the hucksters of the ultra-right in the 1960's.

Still a third factor in accounting for the blend of responsible and irresponsible in corporate programs was the move by many producers of "hard-line" free-enterprise materials widely used in the corporate community to catch the "study Communism" wave and profit from it. Companies that had grown used to buying the weekly or monthly output of groups like the National Education Program simply continued buying their materials after 1958 when these groups went into the anti-Communism business in a big way and began producing ultra-right items like *Communism on the Map.*

BUT whatever the exact explanation of the vulnerability of many major companies to nonsense anti-Communism may be, there were some encouraging signs in 1962 and 1963 that leaders within the business community were becoming aware of the situation. Several important management groups, including the American Management Association and the Effective Citizens Organization (the latter a clearinghouse for corporate public affairs officers and activities) have begun to distribute lists of responsible films, books, and speakers, and to advise interested companies about course-packagers to be avoided. During 1962, also, Frank Barnett, then research director of the Richardson Foundation

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(supported by Vick Chemical Co. funds) delivered a series of influential speeches cautioning businessmen on how to run—and how not to run—a "cold war seminar." Rightist seminars, Barnett said, "define Communism, not as the massive power of the Sino-Soviet axis, with its mass armies, rockets and scientific resources, with its propaganda and economic warfare techniques—but as fluoridation of water or the income tax or the TVA." Instead he called for "quality control" seminars, and under his guidance such seminars have been held at conventions of the National Association of Manufacturers, American Bar Association, and Young Presidents Organization, as well as on a regional basis throughout the country.* At one of these, for example (in Ashville, North Carolina on May 17, 1963), Attorney General Robert Kennedy spoke of the crucial relevance of civil rights and civil liberties to the fight against Communism.

Despite such moderately encouraging developments as these, there is still cause for concern over the anti-Communist programs being run by most of the blue-chip corporations today. Of course, corporations have a legal right to use any kind of material they choose and to propagate any ideological line they wish. But since most companies, for obvious reasons, insist that their programs are motivated by the desire to make a real contribution to the national debate over American foreign policy rather than by political evangelism or business interest, there *are* standards that the public has a right to expect them to meet, or at least to strive toward.

They should, for example, study Communism not in isolation but in the context of the realities of international relations in the 1960's—military, ideological, and political. They should also provide a decent spectrum of views about the Communist world and American alternatives in dealing with it. And they should, finally, make a serious effort to encourage debate and pose "problems" rather than offering pre-packaged "solutions." All of this would involve getting into the problem of flexible tactics in countering Soviet moves; inviting the expression of views like those of Adlai Stevenson and Senator Fulbright or even H. Stuart Hughes (to match the "hard Right"); pointing out that there is a conflict between certain internal security measures and traditional American civil liberties and discussing the relative values involved; and examining both sides of the debate over aid to Poland or Indonesia, or over disarmament negotiations, etc., etc., etc.

This is not a utopian ideal. There are some companies which adhere faithfully to just such rules in their corporate public affairs programs—Western Electric, for one. Determined to make its program a model of balanced and objective education, Western Electric has hired skilled public affairs personnel (and left them free to do their work), and has cooperated with the labor unions in the industry to insure complete acceptance by employees. The number of companies who decide to follow this lead will be a revealing index of how the "new men of business" are using their corporate treasuries and their authority over millions of employees as the 1960's wear on.

* Barnett has been sharply attacked both by liberals and radical rightists. Dan Smoot has condemned Barnett for belonging to the Council on Foreign Relations and for failing to hit the real enemy of America—the pro-Communists at home who were "dragging us into one-world socialism." Some liberal commentators have denounced Barnett for his proposals to use paramilitary organizations and to establish a Freedom Academy for training in cold war ideology; they also cite his connections with "hard-line" anti-Communist groups such as the Institute for American Strategy and the American Security Council.

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A SURVEY OF RECENT FICTION

THE GROUP. By MARY MCCARTHY. *Harcourt, Brace & World. 378 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by THOMAS ROGERS

THE CHIEF opinion about Mary McCarthy is that she is brilliant. Sometimes her brilliance is qualified—"witty," or "wicked," or "limpid," as on the dust jacket of *The Group,* her latest novel—but that is as far as judgment seems to go. It is as if everyone were agreed that brilliance is a species of writing—some writers are novelists, some are poets, some are critics, and Mary McCarthy is brilliant. But what is she brilliant about? Or is her brilliance a brilliance of style? One doesn't quite know. No one says. Her books have been curiously obscured within the general dazzle of her reputation. Even the severe criticism that has been made of *The Group* is evidence of the dazzle, for the main point of the critics is that the book is an aberrant departure from Mary McCarthy's previous work. However, the style and theme of *The Group* make it a highly characteristic book, almost the quintessence of Mary McCarthyism.

Mary McCarthy's style has always been remarkably factual and dispassionate. In *The Group* these qualities are even more remarkably in evidence: the novel is crammed with odd facts, bulging with recipes and household hints, and swollen with social and sexual details. Assuming one didn't already know, one learns by reading *The Group* that Norman Thomas raises cocker spaniels, Katherine Hepburn was Bryn Mawr '29, and iceberg lettuce first appeared on the New York market in the early 30's. One learns how to make *bowle,* and where, in NYC, to purchase the ingredients. One learns how to undergo defloration, purchase and insert a diaphragm, and nurse a baby. All this information has a detached, and, precisely, informative ring to it:

> "He won't nurse," said Priss. The three women looked at each other and sighed jointly. "Let's see if you have any milk left," said the older nurse finally, in a practical tone. She moved the baby's head slightly to one side and squeezed Priss's breast; a drop of watery liquid appeared. "You can try it," she conceded. "But he'll have to work for his supper. The harder he works, of course, the more milk you produce. The breast should be well drained . . ."

In "Fact and Fiction," one of her recent essays, Miss McCarthy points out that there are large chunks of informative matter in most great novels; for example, one can learn how to reap a field and make strawberry jam from reading *Anna Karenina.* Perhaps one can. But in *Anna Karenina,* when Levin reaps wheat with his peasants, what is uppermost is the moral meaning of the action. The scene is passionate, and, although there are some technical details about reaping, I very much doubt that Tolstoy included them for their informative value, since the point of the scene is that one learns to farm by getting out with the peasants and reaping rather than sitting in the house reading books. In contrast, Miss McCarthy's technical and informative matter exists more or less for its own sake. She gathers her facts from domestic life, but the facts often become denatured in the process, so that when she describes such matters as nursing or love scenes—sexual behavior is perhaps the better term—she is very clear and specific, but discouraging.

There must be few—I cannot think of any—current writers in English who sound like Mary McCarthy. She seems to belong to an earlier generation of French and French-influenced writers such as Lytton Strachey who blend minute and intimate psychological detail with the chaste tone of classic objectivity. André Gide describing his sexual aberrations sounds pure, factual, and high-minded much as Mary McCarthy sounds describing the sensations of her heroines caught in a horrible copulation. Along with being unusually detailed, her treatment of character and situation is unusually determined. Another writer might be content to say that a character didn't feel up to fixing Welsh rabbit, but Mary McCarthy specifies a whole train of cause and effect:

> She opened a can of beans and dumped them into a baking dish; on top she put strips of bacon. On the way home on the El she had decided to make Welsh rabbit with beer, to surprise Harald, but now she was afraid to in case it should curdle and give Harald a chance to lecture her. She pulled apart a head of lettuce and started her salad dressing. All at once, thinking of the Welsh rabbit that they were not going to have tonight just because Harald had lost his job, she gave a loud sob.

As is evident here, Miss McCarthy is very good at showing how the life and feelings of women are mixed up in things, particularly those things—clothes, furniture, food, etc.—which make up the domestic routine. Yet, the proliferation of such detail has the effect of robbing her characters of freedom, as though they were all prisoners in a Cartesian universe, enmeshed in those great chains of causation that lead from the First Cause to each tiny effect.

This is the style, then, of a writer on whom nothing is lost and for whom everything figures. Miss McCarthy does not handle words with unusual distinction—in that sense she is not a stylist at all—yet her prose is unmistakable. At its most characteristic her writing has a finely articulated grayness that comes from a series of wonderfully linked, perfectly comprehended minutiae. This is why it seems so odd to call her a brilliant writer. She has wit and intellectual acuity to spare, but little sense of proportion, no economy, and above all no dazzle.

WITH THIS style Mary McCarthy has for some years been writing a drama of the sexes. Her central figure is always feminine—Margaret Sargent in *The Company She Keeps,* Martha Sinnot in *A Charmed Life.* In *The Oasis* and *The Groves of Academe,*

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where there is no central woman, the feminine role is played by the community itself—the mountain-top utopia and the liberal girls' school, respectively. These are communities with ideals to be flirted with and betrayed just as one flirts with and betrays a woman. Miss McCarthy's heroines and feminized communities are noble, high-minded, and a trifle foolish. They attempt to lead ordered, rational lives, but are surrounded, threatened, and finally overwhelmed by the disordering, irrational, vulgar forces of the world.

These forces are, by and large, masculine—personified by the men who keep company with Margaret Sargent, by the ex-husband and the drunken Cape Cod village that kill Martha Sinnot, by the blueberry pickers who invade Utopia and the male intellectuals who bore from within, and by Professor Mulcahy who sabotages and almost wrecks the girls' school.

This line-up of forces strongly suggests an old-fashioned feminist viewpoint. But Miss McCarthy avoids the appearance of taking a feminist *parti-pris* by rigorously exposing the vanity, folly, and weakness of her heroines. Margaret Sargent, for example, is revealed to have inner disorders which make her masochistically cooperate with the men who seek to use and dominate her. Nevertheless, though her women and communities are exposed, we are meant to be on their side finally and against the brutal and triumphant forces represented by men. And in much of Miss McCarthy's later fiction there is an increasing sense of baffled helplessness, an undercurrent of terror at the powerlessness of women to save themselves, or even to help themselves. The sardonic amusement with which she watched Margaret Sargent make a mess out of her life has gradually disappeared to be replaced by the queer, hard, semi-tragic feeling that one finds at the end of *A Charmed Life* and throughout *The Group*.

The Group is an episodic novel with a collective heroine, a number of Vassar girls who roomed together at college. The book begins with a wedding in June 1933, and ends with a funeral in July 1940; in between we learn what happens to those members of the Group who settle in New York City. The other girls more or less drop out of the story, although they have a meaningful role in the book: there is a collective (Group) point of view, and to a certain extent the individual experiences of each member add up to the collective experience of all. Out of their separate adventures a single image gradually takes shape: that of vital, attractive, promising young women thrown carelessly into a world that has no way of using their best qualities.

Like all Miss McCarthy's heroines, the Group wants to live a free, sensible, civilized life, and, like all her heroines, the Group fails. This failure is primarily due to men; the Group finds itself (herself?) deflowered, messed up, abandoned, deceived, betrayed, nearly raped, deserted, and divorced by men. Only two members of the Group live anything like the life they intended to live and these two are Helena, the virgin, and Elinor, the elegant and beautiful lesbian. In a final scene of puzzling and rather suppressed emotion, Elinor triumphs over the ex-husband of Kay Strong, the girl who is being buried in a fine, tasteful funeral planned by the Group. The bitter point seems to be that although men mess up the lives of women, the only alternatives to them are sterility and death, lesbianism and funerals.

With so many women to work with and understand, Miss McCarthy skimps what has always been the weakest element in her fiction, men. By now she seems to take for granted that even the sloppy and deplorable Norine Schmittlapp, a Vassar girl, though not a member of the Group, is more attractive and interesting than either of the husbands she acquires. Moreover, since there is no detailed or persuasive observation of men, the catastrophes and confusions, and even the loves of the Group are mysteriously unexplained. We know all about why Kay cries as she fixes baked beans, but we are less sure why Harald lost his job and what Kay saw in him in the first place. In *The Group* the central feminine role has swelled and crowded out the masculine role which now exists, only as a vague but inexorable presence that brings sorrow and disorder into women's lives. A better title for this undramatic, rather shapeless, and strangely obsessed novel might be "Women Without Men."

Nevertheless, *The Group* is undoubtedly interesting in spots and it seems to be immensely popular. Clearly, many people today enjoy receiving clever information about diaphragms and sex techniques and theories of baby care. There is also a more subtle appeal, at least for that segment of Miss McCarthy's audience which is sophisticated and sensitive like the characters in her novels. In such an audience one finds a strong undercurrent of identification with the besieged, cultivated women of Mary McCarthy's world, whose talents are unsuitably employed. The academic community, for example, is probably rich in Mary McCarthy fans these days; it being a community whose wit, like hers, derives from feeling both superior to and threatened by the rough forces of the great world.

■ ■ ■

THE BENEFACTOR. By SUSAN SONTAG. *Farrar, Straus & Company. 274 pp. $4.50.*

NICKEL MISERIES. By IVAN GOLD *Viking. 224 pp. $3.95.*

Reviewed by ROBERT W. FLINT

SUSAN SONTAG and Ivan Gold have in common their birth in New York within a year of each other and their very considerable gifts as writers. These gifts result in such radically different kinds of fiction that I thought their mere juxtaposition would make a sufficiently interesting thesis, without further elaboration by me.

If Susan Sontag, in her first novel, *The Benefactor,* has written a *Marius the Epicurean* for the 1960's, it must be said that she has done so with a rapt and thorough awareness of what she was about. And also with an even-tempered, cheerful, business-like candor. Anyone who knows the brilliant ancestry of this kind of novel (see the chapter "Axel and Rimbaud" in Edmund Wilson's *Axel's Castle*) will appreciate how well she has adapted her sources to her own temper and how right she was to paraphrase and allegorize this background into dream and aphorism, to avoid assigning Hippolyte, her Des Esseintes-type narrator, any literary ambitions, and, finally, to avoid falling into the high vatic style of late 19th-century reactionary aestheticism, even by way of parody. She is also to be commended for having resisted the going version of the Tragic View of Life, so quickly

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recognized by alumni of Hum. 2a and, in most cases, as quickly forgotten.

The Benefactor is an intricate, ambitious fantasia on themes suggested by European literary modernism roughly up to and including Simone Weil (her speculations on *grâce* and *pesanteur*) and Jean Genet (his deliberate choice of inauthenticity as a pretext for action in a hypocritical world) as seen through the eyes of someone deeply committed to the philosophical and psychological premises of the "cool" world of the 60's, European *and* American. (I mean the word in no derogatory sense.) Not the mores or the latest jargon, but the idea and essence of the Cool is what she is after; her narrator's crisis straddles the war-time 40's, but she herself is closer in spirit to Robbe-Grillet and Uwe Johnson than to Weil or Genet. It is the prosy, circumstantial deliberateness of what might easily have been merely another flashy exercise in neo-surrealism that strikes one at first. Hence the peculiarly neutral "translator's English" of her by no means dull prose and her oddly spotty documentation, meticulous in many details, wholly vague in others. The novel, indeed, is very American in its combination of bookishness, philosophical literalness, and moral hypochondria. No concert of styles and jokes, like *Lolita,* but a highly sober, imaginative investigation of the conceivable roots of inaction.

Hippolyte, a Parisian *rentier* who cultivates his dreams until they merge with his dreamlike waking life, like the good existentialist he is, turns Descartes upside down: "Only because I existed—in other words, thought—did the problem of certitude arise. To reach certitude is to learn that one does not exist." But Hippolyte's existentialism is only a stage in Miss Sontag's quest for the surest foundations of the Cool; her novel, like Pound's engagement with Confucius, is a dramatic meditation on the nature of equilibrium, the Confucian "unwobbling pivot"; in other words, on the positive resources of phlegm. And it is elegiac because science and politics are left out.

As fictional realism of the Mailer, Baldwin, and Heller variety gives itself up to ever subtler ramifications and involutions of conscience, there is much to be said for so uncompromising an antidote as *The Benefactor,* especially when written by a woman; for if the realists short-change anything, it is usually the "feminine" principle of Sufficient Reason. The good-hearted whores and noble companionships of their quasi-military world are not much less abstract, in the last analysis, than Miss Sontag's dream figures out of Kafka and Cocteau. They have, certainly, the gathered force that comes of swimming with the current, while Miss Sontag has much more self-justification to engage in before she can acquire any substance or momentum at all. But her critique of the "European" inversions of humanitarian realism, that so often lurk like a secret vice in the shadows of our breeziest American realism, is both affectionate and skeptical. Her hero is feminine without effeminacy, in the continental tradition, and a quite vigorous *raisonneur.* She assaults him with every temptation and every conventional surrogate for Fulfillment—sadism, egotism, inversion, insanity, promiscuity, bourgeois marriage, and gratuitous social service—bringing him through diminished but relatively intact: "You may imagine me in a bare room"—the novel's last lines—"bundled in many sweaters, my feet near the stove, my black hair turning grey, enjoying the waning tribulations of subjectivity and the repose of a privacy that is genuine." *Voilà que j'ai touché l'automne des idées!* Perhaps only a very young novelist could compose this elegy with such gentle and playful solemnity. Certainly few have known more clearly what they were leaving behind.

Nickel Miseries is also a first book, a collection of two novellas and three short stories, by a Columbia graduate for whom Lionel Trilling has predicted a future as "one of the commanding writers of our time." After three readings of the book over a period of months, I see no reason to quarrel with Trilling. Gold has unusual power, extraordinary finesse, and an ease, a breadth, and subtlety of feeling that remind one of early Faulkner. But I must admit that as a hardened reader of fiction, especially the sort that yields up most of its essence on a first reading, I resisted not only the inevitable blurbs of Trilling and Mark Van Doren, presumably his teachers, but also the whole Faulknerian ambience, that

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fairly leaps at you from the page, of neatly plotted violence, army low life, exotic whorehouses, and diagrammatic social significance. Italicized inner monologue, frightful sex, smashing fists, poetic desolation—on a hasty reading it all looked too much like another standard product of that Midwestern Faulkner factory where James Jones cut his teeth.

But I was quite spectacularly wrong, and offer my experience as another homily on the extrinsic value of time in the mundane career of any good art. It is easy to forget that when a good novelist makes "his own world," he also sets his own pace by an infinite variety of subtle adjustments, and that the growing obliquity or eccentricity of fiction in the 20th century virtually guarantees a distinct new tempo for each new writer of any stature. Ivan Gold's stories are deceptive because they follow, to the edge of parody, the conventions of the well-made story as taught in the fiction workshops; the "closed" story, in other words, where irony and coincidence help each other, *pari passu,* up the ladder to Vision, and where our interest in the characters is exhausted by the action; the *beau idéal* of contemporary naturalism.

But a peculiar thing happens in these stories. You swallow the violence—Bobbie Bedmer's one hundred sixty-fold rape in "A Change of Air," the Negro Pfc.'s crucifixion in "The Nickel Miseries of George Washington Carver Brown," the smashing of the narrator's face by a madman in "All You Faceless Voyagers," sundry other crashes, smashes, and fornications in the two Japanese stories—you acknowledge what Trilling calls "the bold originality of [the fiction's] moral conception"; namely, that Gold will yield to absolutely nobody in his insistence on the possible grimness of things—and then you suddenly find yourself caught by a current that flows just under the surface of these all-too-recognizable conventions; you realize that this skeleton of horror and grimness, essential and edifying as it is, can be provisionally forgotten and the stories read again for their amazing fullness of life, only for this, as one can read Gogol and Chekhov. The tempo is much slower and more expansive than it appears at first.

In the Negro crucifixion story, for instance, there is an Italo-American

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sergeant, Divino, who acts as the real pivot of feeling, whose humor and humanity would carry any story. He has no authority over the harried victim and plays no obvious role in the moral dialogue. But he is one of Gold's happiest successes, a vessel of the complex "horizontal" play of emotion in these otherwise fiercely "vertical" stories. The most ambitious of the novellas, "Taub East," concerns the futile efforts of a fat, ugly, priggish young Jewish cantor to scratch up a *minyan,* the "ten-man cachet," for his services at an American army base at Hara, the Japanese town where Fenollosa was buried. As a foil to Taub and his hyper-Jewishness, Gold gives us a chronic Pfc. and elderly delinquent called Popkin, whose only motive for attending services is to keep tabs on his pretty Japanese shack-up, Reiko. To say that every flicker of pathos and humor is extracted from this situation, which is true, is still to be unprepared for Gold's gratuitously wonderful Japanese whores and their surgical use of GI smut. James Jones never had an ear like this. Atmosphere nearly overwhelms the fable.

The precocity of the balance that Gold strikes in his first book between the formal requirements of story-telling and the sense of life that provides continual pleasure and surprise, once you have measured his stride, makes his future secure.

■ ■ ■

CONFUSIONS. By JACK LUDWIG. *New York Graphic Society. 276 pp. $4.95.*

THE WAR OF CAMP OMONGO. By BURT BLECHMAN. *Random House. 215 pp. $3.95.*

STICK YOUR NECK OUT. By MORDECAI RICHLER. *Simon & Schuster. 189 pp. $3.95.*

Reviewed by STANLEY KAUFFMANN

IT'S ALL very well for critics to announce that the novel is dying. They dust off their hands, then turn away to cozy exegeses of Joyce or Proust. But what about the unlucky fellow who has been born with novelistic talent? What is he supposed to do? Become a critic? Or take up arc-welding? He knows, at least as well as the critics, what the state of the novel is: more accurately, what the state of society is—its tenuous apposition to the novel. But unless he is to play Miniver Cheevy all his life, he has to find at least partial solutions.

Certain possibilities have been posited. One proposal, already withering, was science fiction. Kosherized by Kingsley Amis and others, s-f was held to be a means of circumventing the present difficulties of the novel; one could simply take off into the blue and invent mirror-image societies. But I know of no serious younger writer who has switched to this channel. Another possibility, used increasingly by younger men of talent, by such writers as J. P. Donleavy, Terry Southern, Joseph Heller, and the three writers discussed here, is the one labeled, loosely, satire.

The satire guild rules are clear. One starts from certain elite premises: growth of conformity, growth of mass-produced pap for both masses and middlebrows, the faltering of idealism, the limitation of horizons by the mushroom cloud. These premises eliminate the "conventional" novel that depends on hope, freedom of action, fierce belief in the sanctity of the individual, dependable moral response. There is nothing constructive to write; there is really nothing even destructive to accomplish in any old-fashioned, cleansing manner. The only reasonable alternative is, in two senses, enjoyment of your powers—principally with archery from the sidelines. Amuse the few caves of humanity, scattered here and there in the Himalayan apartment developments, with commiserative, savage glee.

The above is meant as descriptive, not pejorative. There is truth in the premises, immediate artistic practicality in the solution. The only relevant questions are: (a) how well is it executed?; (b) granted that it serves as an outlet for writers, are there still rewards in it for readers? For, after the first dozen or so blow-torch satires, we begin to anticipate the targets, mentally reproving those writers who have skipped *J* or *K* and jumped to *L*, comparing Jones's jab with Smith's stab as balletomanes compare pirouettes. Camus's familiar line about judging men today by the quality of their despair could be altered to judging them by their ridicule.

The three writers under review are —it is highly relevant—Jewish. Jack Ludwig's hero is impaled on the point of convergence of Jewish past and

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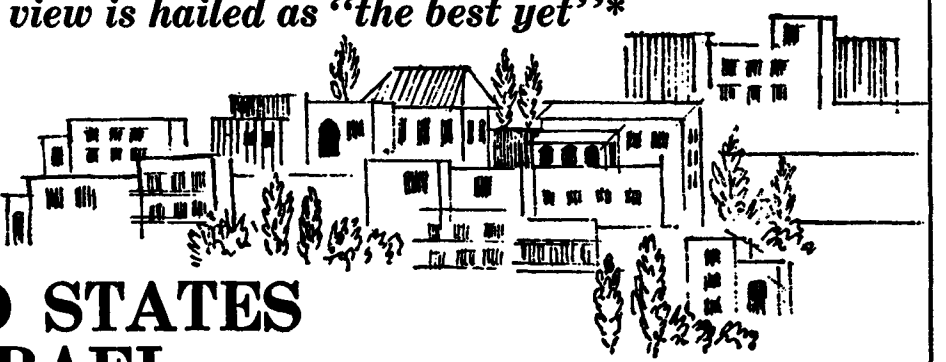

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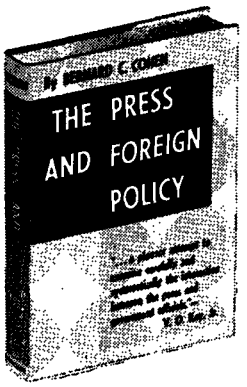

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fake-Christian present. Burt Blechman's summer camp is a theater where the children of lately immigrated Jews mimic the Gentile American frontier that they missed. Mordecai Richler takes an Eskimo as a hero presumably because his urban Canadian Jews are by now too far inside to be observers or catalysts.

Ludwig's book bubbles from a sort of Cartesian well; his hero's revision reads: "I am confused, therefore I am." Joseph Gillis, born Galsky, is the son of a Roxbury, Mass. baker; he goes to Harvard, acquires the appropriate genus marks, and emerges as a Ph.D. in English whose conflict is heightened by his marriage to a Unitarian. (With her own problems. Unitarianism, said Erasmus Darwin in the 18th Century, is "a feather-bed to catch falling Christians.") Galsky-Gillis juggles his *personae* to his own wry amusement and, somewhat, to ours, as he meets and marries Nancy, reminisces about adolescent escapades, and proceeds to teach at a small California college. There he is touched to a finer issue: a move to certify a student—a millionaire donor's son—as mentally incompetent.

High among the novel's achievements is a party given by a California colleague which is supposed to end with musical beds and from which Joe devises a clever but narrow escape. There are other chapters of sexual and academic comedy in which Ludwig's vigor, aimed accurately, becomes wit. But when it misses, it remains mere energy, and the book spins into lengthy barroom and campus chat of forced, frenetic marital dialogue. Also there is a tiresome 20th-century Devil accoutred by *Esquire*. The over-all structure is a patchwork of sharply inconsistent textures, and the epilogue is a shameless attempt to avert criticism of inconclusiveness and lack of theme.

BLECHMAN'S NOVEL, although it has some funny elements, is a retrospective work of teeth-clenched hate—revenge eaten cold, as the Italians say. Randy Levine is a likeable little boy sent to a summer camp run by a windy faker with a lecherous wife, with a staff that provides a microcosm of contemporary frailties and a group of boys who are the circumcised equivalents of William Golding's lot. The "war" is an end-of-season contest between Red and Blue teams, and gentle Randy, harassed into belligerence, wins a paper chase, not without having been driven into arson.

The book is composed of a large number of short sections, each with a sub-title, each laid down like a tile in a mosaic of utter loathing. Its virtues are its purity of hate and its parsimony of means—there are few superfluous words. Its chief defects are that its points are early taken, most of its lampoons quickly perceived. Despite the tidy execution in general, the director's gaseous orations become predictable; parodies of a war movie and of Elvis Presley are weak because these subjects are parodies in themselves.

Stick Your Neck Out, in Richler's novel, is the name of a TV quiz show that the contestant plays with his head on a guillotine block. The hero does not play it until the last chapter. The scene is Toronto, and the story concerns a wised-up young Eskimo poet. While Toronto hucksters preserve his image as a primitive, he has imported a clutch of relatives to turn out native artifacts in a cellar at a nice profit. He is surrounded by a gallery of moral grotesques that includes a mistress who was the first female to swim Lake Ontario in less that twenty hours, a bulldozing tycoon, a vicious lady columnist, an elderly sociology student named Panofsky who poses as a doctor, and his high-pressure son who has changed his name to Peel and introduces himself: "Hi, my name is Peel. I'm Jewish."

The sick hustle of advertising, television, salesmanship, streamlined religion, the face-to-the-camera attitudes of everything from publicity itself to gymnastic love-making—these are some of Richler's somewhat familiar butts. The proof of his quality is that he is as amused, and amusing, as if he had just landed on earth and were sending us back a report. (An old Eskimo complains of Toronto people that they eat "*artificially* frozen foods.")

THUS THESE three writers have found ways to write in and for a world which, more or less, they despise. Ludwig, an intellectually superior Peel, finds roots as a writer in his rootlessness. Blechman, who presumably will never forgive the past for what it has done to him, rubs the present in it. Richler is unprejudiced;

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he thinks *everything* is funny. The latter two novels, one can fairly say, are devoid of hope; and Ludwig is hiply nervous about his relatively rosy ending.

One does not ask hope of them: why should they know answers just because they can write novels? Their service, these three and their fellow satirists, is to make us consider what lies beneath their gallows humor: the individual, buffeted and shrunken, in an increasingly industrialized society. His future, his fate. As cities zoom, he becomes physically smaller. What is worse, his feelings, his once spontaneous responses, even his animosities, are mass-communicated into molds. (Juvenile delinquents imitate TV hoods; small-town politicians utter newsreel-size pronouncements; the brother of a slain New Jersey policeman, informed of the murder, voices his anguish in imitation James Cagney phrases.) It is now reasonably clear that the mushroom cloud is by no means the only threat to the survival of humanity. In a society that seems able to breathe only in the iron lung of production and selling, inhale and exhale, men not only have to move together, as in enormous calisthenics, they have to choose and think and feel within predictable, happy, product-consuming boundaries; or the pattern is upset, the economy undermined. If enough people didn't want the plastic soap-dish or the *Reader's Digest* book selection, their individuality of taste would make a mockery of electronic computation.

SINCE the industrial age cannot be uninvented, any more than the Bomb can be, what are the chances for a man? For one man, however many of them there may be. Marx, who foresaw the inevitability of the machine age, hoped that socialist humanists at the controls would make all the difference. It has not happened yet, here or elsewhere; but perhaps our affluence (though less affluent than popularly thought) is only a brief, fatty delay in a huge political-social change that will at least give a man a fair chance against the machines. Or perhaps, basically unchanged, we will plunge into an air-conditioned industrial wilderness and will wander a figurative forty years before we insist on emerging in some kind of rebirth.

Meanwhile, honest and gifted writers have to face the present facts.

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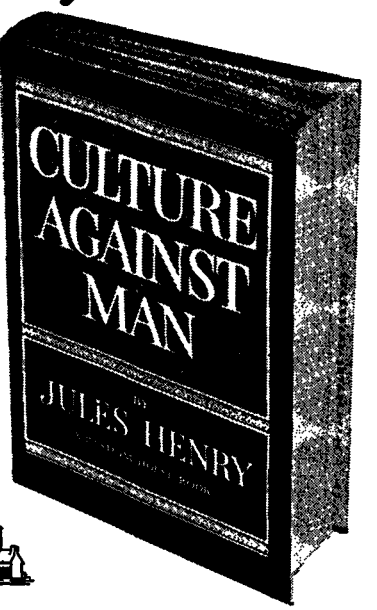

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among which is the diminished relevance of the novel to a society stunned by 20th-century catastrophe and threat of catastrophe, increasingly unconfident of divine guidance, increasingly herded by mechanized shepherds. Some writers, very well aware of these matters, nevertheless plump for historical humanism in relatively unaltered form and—often with success—carry the "old" novel into the present. Others feel that the hostilities and irrelevancies are too patent and powerful, that seriousness is mocked, and the only recourse is to laugh. Their laughter is different from any in the chronicle of literary laughter on this continent, which has always had a strong pessimistic strain, because it does not have even the relative sanguineness of pessimism.

Their chief hazard is ennui—ours, not theirs. There is a limit to the amount of laughing we can do at ourselves in wretched circumstances, the same set of wretched circumstances, no matter how real they are and even if laughter is the only available relief. If these writers forbid us to hope for significant improvement in society, then at least, for the sake of their future books, we must hope to develop some new faults.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

THOMAS ROGERS *teaches English at Pennsylvania State University. His review of* The Go-Away Bird and Other Stories *by Muriel Spark appeared in our March 1961 number.*

ROBERT W. FLINT *contributes regularly to* Partisan Review *and the* New York Review, *as well as to* COMMENTARY.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN *is the movie reviewer for the* New Republic. *He is appearing in these pages for the first time.*

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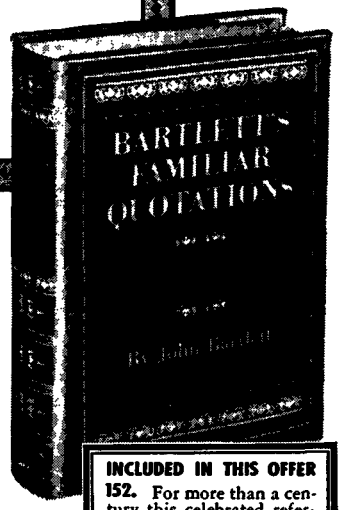

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